A

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

IN A

SERIES OF LETTERS

FROM A

NOBLEMAN TO HIS SON,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

TWO LETTERS

ON THE

STUDY AND BIOGRAPHY

OF THE

ANCIENT AND MODERN BRITISH HISTORIANS.

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LETTER XLVII.

AS we deſcend, we find the materials for Engliſh hiſtory increaſe: the minuteſt tranſactions are recorded with prolixity; and theſe, however dry and unimproving to ſome, are yet both intereſting and ſatisfactory to others. In ſuch a profuſion of materials I muſt be content rather to give the ſpirit of the following reigns, than pretend to exhibit a hiſtorical detail of particular intereſts and intrigues. It will be enough to mark thoſe ſtrong outlines that may probably eſcape the wreck of time, when the internal coloring ſhall fade. As hiſtory increaſes in time by the addition of new events, an epitome becomes more neceſſary to abridge its excreſcences.

The duke of York, who ſucceeded his brother, with the title of king James the ſecond,* had been bred a papiſt, and was ſtrongly bigotted

* *A. D.* 1685.

to his principles. It is the property of that religion, almoſt ever, to contract the ſphere of the underſtanding: and, until people are, in ſome meaſure, diſengaged from its prejudices, it is impoſſible to lay a juſt claim to extenſive views, or conſiſtency of deſign. The intellects of this prince were naturally weak, and his bigotted principles ſtill rendered them more feeble: he conceived the ridiculous project of reigning in the arbitrary manner of his predeceſſor, and changing the eſtabliſhed religion of his country, at a time when his perſon was hated, and the eſtabliſhed religion was univerſally approved.

The people of England were now entirely changed from what they had been in the times of Henry, Mary, and Elizabeth, who had altered religion at will. Learning was now as much cultivated by the laity as by the prieſthood; every man now pretended to think for himſelf, and had rational grounds for his opinion. In the beginning of the reformation the monarchs had only to bring over the clergy, in order totally to change the modes of belief; for the people were entirely guided by their paſtors. To influence the prieſthood was an eaſy taſk: the hopes of preferment, or the fears of degradation, entirely ſubjected the conſciences of the clergy to the royal will. Such it was then: but the circumſtances of the nation were, at preſent, entirely altered; and to make a change in religion, it would have been neceſſary to tamper with every individual in the ſtate. But

James had no idea of the alteration of circumſtances; his ſituation, he thought, ſupplied him with authority, and his zeal furniſhed him with hope of accompliſhing this chimerical deſign.

The ſucceſs he met with in cruſhing a rebellion, in the opening of his reign, ſeemed to promiſe a favorable omen toward the completion of his wiſhes. The duke of Monmouth, who had long been at the head of faction, and inflamed all the diſcontent that moleſted the late king's reign, was now reſolved to aim at the crown. He was the darling of the people; and ſome averred that the king had married his mother, and owned his legitimacy at his death. The earl of Argyll ſeconded his views, and they formed the ſcheme of a double inſurrection. Argyll firſt landed in Scotland, publiſhed his manifeſtoes *, put himſelf at the head of two thouſand five hundred men, and attempted to influence the nation; but a formidable body of the king's forces coming againſt him, his army fell away, and he himſelf, after being wounded in attempting to eſcape, was taken by a peaſant, ſtanding up to his neck in water. Being brought to Edinburgh, he prepared for his death, well knowing that it was not in the king's nature to forgive an enemy.

The duke of Monmouth was not more fortunate: he ſailed from the Texel with three veſſels, and arrived on the coaſts of Dorſetſhire with about fourſcore followers. The country ſoon flocked in to his ſtandard, and in two days

A. D. 1685.

his army was increaſed to two thouſand men. The earl of Feverſham was ſent to oppoſe him, and took poſt at Sedgemore, a village in Somerſetſhire. Monmouth reſolved to fight him; and began his march about eleven in the night, with profound ſilence; but the royaliſts were prepared for his reception: the action began at daybreak. Lord Grey, who commanded the duke of Monmouth's horſe, was routed at the firſt onſet. The duke at the head of his infantry, bravely maintained his ground, until he was charged in flank by the enemy's horſe, who had been juſt now victorious. A total rout enſued; three hundred were killed in the engagement, and a thouſand in purſuit. The duke eſcaped the carnage, and, in a ſhepherd's diſguiſe, fled on foot, attended by a faithful companion, who had followed his fortunes into England. Thus they travelled on toward Dorſetſhire, till, quite exhauſted with hunger and fatigue, they lay down in a field, and covered themſelves with ſtubble. In this forlorn ſituation he was found, with ſome peaſe in his pocket, which he had gathered in the fields to ſuſtain life. His ſpirit ſunk with his misfortunes; he wrote to the king; implored his mercy. The king gave him an audience, as if willing to ſatisfy his vengeance with the ſight of a rival's miſery; but his death was determined, and no entreaties could extort royal clemency. On the ſcaffold he reſumed his former courage, handled the axe, declared that he meant well to the nation, and his head was cut off, but not till after the third blow.

But it were happy for the nation, and fortunate for the king, if the blood that was already ſhed had been thought a ſufficient expiation for the late offence. The victorious army behaved with the moſt ſavage cruelty to the priſoners taken after the battle. Their inhumanity was properly ſeconded by Jefferies, who was ſent on the weſtern circuit to try the inſurgents. His furious thirſt of blood being inflamed by continual intoxication, he threatened, calumniated, and threw aſide every appearance of clemency. Men and women indiſcriminately felt the effects of his ſavage zeal; and not leſs than two hundred and fifty perſons expired under circumſtances of wanton cruelty. Cruel kings ever find cruel miniſters.

It was not to be expected, that theſe butcheries, could acquire the king the love or the confidence of his people, or tend to alter their opinions, as they rather excited the ſecret abhorrence of every honeſt man; yet he thought this a time favorable for the carrying on his ſcheme of religion and arbitrary government. An attempt at arbitrary power in Charles was, in ſome meaſure, excuſable, as he had a republican faction to oppoſe; and it might have been prudent at that time to overſtep juſtice, in order to attain ſecurity: but the ſame deſigns in James were as unneceſſary as impracticable, ſince there were few republicans remaining, and the people were ſatisfied with limited monarchy. But this weak and deluded monarch was reſolved to imitate one or two princes of Europe, who had juſt before rendered themſelves abſolute;

and he was incited to this project by Lewis XIV, who ſecretly deſired his deſtruction Thus inſtigated, he began his deſigns with the meaſures which he ſhould not have uſed till their completion. He ſent a ſplendid embaſſy to Rome, to acknowledge his obedience to the pope. Innocent, who then filled the chair, was too good a politician to approve of ſuch childiſh meaſures, and gave his ambaſſador a very cool reception. He was ſenſible that the king was openly ſtriking at thoſe laws and opinions, which it was his buſineſs to undermine in ſilence and ſecurity. The cardinals were even heard facetiouſly to declare, *that the king ſhould be excommunicated for thus endeavouring to overturn the ſmall remains of popery that ſtill ſubſiſted in England.*

James, notwithſtanding theſe diſcouragements, was yet reſolved to proſecute his favorite ſcheme with vigor. Upon every occaſion the catholics ſhared his confidence and favor. Hugh Peters, his confeſſor, ruled his conſcience, and drove him blindly forward to attempt innovation. He became every day more and more ambitious of making converts; the earl of Sunderland ſacrificed his religion to his ambition; the earl of Rocheſter loſt his employment of treaſurer, for refuſing to alter his religion. The king ſtooped ſo low as to his officers: a rough ſoldier one day anſwered his remonſtrances by ſaying he was pre-engaged, for he had promiſed the king of Morocco, when he was quartered at Tangiers, that, ſhould he ever change his religion, he would turn Mahometan.

An eccleſiaſtical court was erected with power to puniſh all delinquents, or ſuch ſo reputed by the court, with all manner of eccleſiaſtical cenſures. * The vicechancellor of Cambridge was ſummoned before this court for having refuſed to admit one Francis, a Benedictine monk, to the degree of maſter of arts: the vicechancellor was deprived of his office, but the univerſity perſiſted in their refuſal, and the king thought proper to deſiſt from his purpoſe. The vicepreſident and fellows of Magdalen college in Oxford were treated with more ſeverity. They refuſed to admit one Farmer, a new convert, and one of a profligate life, who was nominated by the king to the place of preſident, now become vacant. The king next nominated Parker, biſhop of Oxford; but he was equally obnoxious for the ſame reaſons. The king repaired in perſon to Oxford: he reproached the fellows with inſolence and diſobedience; but neither he, nor his miniſters, could prevail to alter the reſolutions of this ſociety. The fellows were expelled by his order, and their places filled with papiſts, who he knew would be more obedient to his commands.

His deſigns hitherto were ſufficiently manifeſt; but he was now reſolved entirely to throw off the maſk. By his permiſſion the pope's nuncio made his public entry into Windſor in his pontificals, preceded by the croſs, and attended by a great number of monks, in the habit of their reſpective orders. He next

* A. D. 1686.

publiſhed a declaration for liberty of conſcience, by which all reſtraints upon popery were taken away. The church of England took the alarm. The peculiar animoſity of the people againſt the catholic religion proceeded not leſs from religious than temporal motives. It is the ſpirit of that religion to favor arbitrary power, and its reproach to encourage perſecution. The Engliſh had too often ſmarted under both, to be willing again to ſubmit to either. Seven biſhops, who had received the king's expreſs orders to cauſe this declaration of liberty of conſcience to be read in their churches, refuſed to comply. They drew up a modeſt petition to excuſe their refuſal, which only ſerved to increaſe the king's reſentment and rage. They were cited before the council, * and ſtill adhered to their former reſolution with that firmneſs which is the characteriſtic of virtue. The attorney-general was ordered to proſecute them for publiſhing ſedition, and abridging the king's prerogative. They were committed priſoners to the Tower, conducted thither amid the prayers and condolence of an incredible multitude of the populace, who regarded them as ſufferers for truth. The day appointed for their trial arrived. The cauſe was looked upon as the criſis of Engliſh freedom. The council managed the debate on both ſides with learning and candor: the jury withdrew into a chamber, where they paſſed the whole night, but next morning returned into court, and declared

* *A. D.* 1687.

the biſhops not guilty. The joy of the people, on this occaſion, was inexpreſſible: the whole city, and the city around, ſeemed at once to catch the ſhouts of exultation; they even reached the camp, where the king was then ſitting at dinner, who heard them with indignation and amazement.

If the biſhops teſtified the readineſs of martyrs in ſupport of their religion, James ſhowed no leſs obſtinacy in his attempts toward the eſtabliſhment of his own. Finding the clergy adverſe to his deſigns, he next tried what he could do with the army. He thought, if one regiment would promiſe implicit obedience, their example would ſoon induce others to the ſame compliance. He ordered one of the regiments to be drawn up in his preſence, and deſired that ſuch as were againſt his late declaration of liberty ſhould lay down their arms. He was ſurpriſed to ſee the whole battalion ground their arms, except two officers and a few Roman catholic ſoldiers.

Oppoſition only ſerved to increaſe the infatuated monarch's zeal; he was continually ſtimulated by his queen and his prieſts to proceed raſhly onward. But he was particularly urged on by the jeſuit Peters, his confeſſor, an ambitious and intriguing prieſt, whom ſome hiſtorians have even accuſed of being the creature of the prince of Orange, the king's ſon-in-law, who had long ſince conceived hopes of ſeizing the crown. James now, therefore, iſſued orders for proſecuting all thoſe clergymen who had forborne to read his declaration.

He placed one Gifford, a doctor of the Sorbonne, at the head of Magdalen college, and likewiſe nominated him to the ſee of Oxford, lately become vacant. Every member of the church of England now ſaw their danger; and whigs and tories united their efforts to oppoſe it.

William, prince of Orange, had married Mary the daughter of king James. This prince had been early immerſed in danger, calamities, and politics; the deſigns of France, and the turbulence of Holland, had ſerved to ſharpen his talents, and given him a propenſity for intrigue. This great politician and ſoldier concealed, beneath a phlegmatic appearance, a moſt violent and boundleſs ambition; all his actions were levelled at power, while his diſcourſe never betrayed the wiſhes of his heart. His temper was cold and ſevere, his genius active and piercing; he was valiant without oſtentation, and politic without addreſs; diſdaining the pleaſures, or the elegancies of life, yet eager after the phantom of pre-eminence. He was no ſtranger to the murmurs of the Engliſh, and was reſolved to turn them to his intereſt: he therefore accepted the invitations of the nobility and others, and ſtill more willingly embarked in the cauſe, as he found the malecontents had concerted their meaſures with prudence and ſecrecy.

A fleet was equipped ſufficient to tranſport fifteen thouſand troops; and it was at firſt given out that this armament was deſigned againſt France. James, at length, began to ſee his own errors and the diſcontents of the people: he

would now have retracted his meaſures in favor of popery, but it was too late; the fleet of the prince was already ſailed, and had landed thirteen thouſand troops at the village of Broxholme, in Torbay.

The expectations of the prince of Orange ſeemed, at firſt, to be fruſtrated; very few Engliſhmen offered him their ſervices, though the people were, in general, well affected to his deſign. Slight repulſes were not ſufficient to intimidate a general who had, from early youth, encountered adverſity: he continued ten days in expectation of being joined with the malecontents without ſucceſs; but, juſt when he began to deliberate about reimbarking his forces, he was joined by ſeveral perſons of conſequence, and the country people came flocking to his ſtandard. From this day his numbers began to increaſe; the nobility, which had compoſed the court and council of king James, now left their old maſter to ſolicit protection from the new.

Lewis XIV, had long foreſeen this defection, and had formerly offered the king thirty thouſand men for his ſecurity. This was then refuſed by James, by the advice of Sunderland, his favorite, who was ſecretly in the intereſt of the prince of Orange. James, however, now requeſted aſſiſtance from France, when it was too late. He wrote in vain to Leopold, emperor of Germany, who only returned for anſwer, that what he had foreſeen had happened. He had ſome dependence on his fleet, but they were entirely diſaffected. In a word,

his intereſts were deſerted by all; for he had long deſerted them himſelf. He was at the head of an army of twenty thouſand men, and it is poſſible, that, had he led them to the combat without granting them time for deliberation, they might have fought in his favor: but he was involved in a maze of fears and ſuſpicions; the defection of thoſe he moſt confided in took away his power of deliberation, and his perplexity was increaſed, when told that the prince of Denmark and Anne, his favorite daughter, had gone over to the prince of Orange. In this exigence he could not repreſs his tears, and in the agony of his heart was heard to exclaim, *God help me, my own children have forſaken me!*

He now hung over the precipice of deſtruction! Invaded by one ſon-in-law, abandoned by another, hated by his ſubjects, and deteſted by thoſe who had ſuffered beneath his cruelty. He aſſembled the few noblemen who ſtill adhered to his intereſts, and demanded their advice and aſſiſtance. Addreſſing himſelf to the earl of Bedford, father to lord Ruſſel, who was beheaded by James' intrigues in the preceding reign, *My lord*, ſaid he, *you are an honeſt man, have great credit, and can do me ſignal ſervice. Ah, Sir*, replied the earl, *I am old and feeble, I can do you but little ſervice; but I once had a ſon that could have aſſiſted you, but he is no more.* James was ſo ſtruck with this reply, that he could not ſpeak for ſome minutes.

The king was naturally timid; and ſome counſellors about him, either ſharing his fears, or bribed by the prince, contributed to increaſe his apprehenſions. They reminded him of the fate of Charles I, and aggravated the turbulence of the people. He was, at length, perſuaded to think of flying from a nation he could no longer govern, and of taking refuge at the court of France, where he was ſure of finding aſſiſtance and protection. Thus inſtructed, he firſt ſent away his queen, who arrived ſafely at Calais; and ſoon after, diſguiſing himſelf in a plain dreſs, he went down to Feverſham, and embarked on board a ſmall veſſel for France. But his misfortunes ſtill continued to follow him; the veſſel was detained by the common people, who, not knowing their ſovereign, robbed, inſulted, and abuſed him. He was now perſuaded by the earl of Winchelſea to return to London, where he was once more received amid the acclamations of the people.

The return of James was by no means agreeable to William, though he well knew how to diſſemble. It was his intereſt and his deſign to increaſe the forſaken monarch's apprehenſions, ſo as to induce him to fly. He therefore received the news of his return with a haughty air, and ordered him to leave Whitehall, and to retire to Richmond. The king remonſtrated againſt Richmond, and deſired that Rocheſter might be appointed as the place of his abode. The prince perceived his intention was to leave the kingdom; nor did one wiſh for flight more ardently than the other deſired him away. The

king ſoon concurred with his deſigns: after ſtaying but a ſhort time at Rocheſter, he fled to the ſeaſide, attended by his natural ſon the duke of Berwick, where he embarked for France, and arrived in ſafety, to enjoy, for the reſt of life, the empty title of a king, and the appellation of a ſaint, a title which ſtill flattered him more. There he continued to reſide among a people who pitied, ridiculed, and deſpiſed him. He enrolled himſelf in the order of jeſuits; and the court of Rome, for whom he had loſt all, repaid him only with indulgences and paſquinades.

From this moment the conſtitution of England, that had fluctuated for ſo many ages, was fixed. The nation, repreſented by its parliament, determined the long-conteſted limits between the king and the people: they preſcribed to the prince of Orange the terms by which he was to rule; they choſe him for king, jointly with Mary, who was the next proteſtant heir to the crown. They were crowned by the titles of William III, and Mary, king and queen of England. The prince ſaw his ambition at length gratified; and his wiſdom was repaid with that crown which the folly of his predeceſſor had given away.

LETTER XLVIII.

THOUGH William was choſen king of England, his power was limited on every ſide; and the oppoſition he met with from his parliaments ſtill leſſened his authority. His ſway in Holland,

Holland, where he was but the ſtadtholder, was far more arbitrary; ſo that he might, with greater propriety, have been called the king of the United Provinces, and the ſtadtholder of England. He was not ſufficiently acquainted with the difficulty of governing the nation, by which he was elected: he expected in them a people ready to ſecond the views of his ambition in humbling France; but he found them more apt to fear for the invaſion of their domeſtic liberties from himſelf.

His reign commenced, however, with the ſame attempt which had been the principal cauſe of all the diſturbances in the preceding reign, and had excluded the monarch from the throne. William was a calviniſt, and naturally averſe to perſecution. He therefore began by attempting to repeal thoſe laws that enjoined uniformity of worſhip; and though he could not entirely ſucceed in his deſign, yet a toleration was granted to ſuch diſſenters as ſhould take the oaths of allegiance, and hold no private conventicles. The papiſts alſo enjoyed the lenity of his government; and though the laws againſt them continued to ſubſiſt, yet they were ſeldom put into rigorous execution. What was criminal in James was virtuous in his ſucceſſor: James only wanted to introduce perſecution, by pretending to diſown it; William was averſe to perſecution from principle, and none ſuffered for religious opinions during his reign.

But, though William was acknowledged in England, Scotland was ſtill undetermined. The parliament of that country, however, ſoon

recogniſed his authority, and took that opportunity to aboliſh epiſcopacy, which had been long diſagreeable to the nation. Nothing now remained to the depoſed monarch, of all his former dominions, but Ireland. His cauſe was eſpouſed by all the catholics of that country, who were much more numerous there than thoſe of the proteſtant perſuaſion. The king of France, either touched with compaſſion for his ſufferings, or willing to weaken a rival kingdom by promoting its internal diſſenſions, granted James a fleet and ſome troops, to aſſert his claims there. On the ſeventh day of May this unhappy monarch embarked at Breſt, and on the twenty-ſecond arrived at Kinſale. He was received by the catholics of Ireland with open arms. The proteſtants, who were unanimouſly attached to king William, had been previouſly diſarmed by Tyrconnel, their lord-lieutenant, and a papiſt. James made his public entry into Dublin, amid the acclamations of the inhabitants. He was met by a popiſh proceſſion, bearing the hoſt, which he publicly adored; and this ſerved to alienate the few proteſtants of that kingdom who ſtill adhered to his cauſe. A ſmall party of that religion were reſolved to defend their lives and liberties in the little city of Londonderry. They were beſieged by the forces of king James, and ſuffered all the complicated miſeries of war, famine, and bigotted cruelty; but, determined never to yield, they rejected capitulation, and always repulſed the beſiegers with conſiderable loſs. At length, ſupplies and ſuccours arriving

from England *, king James' army thought proper to raiſe the ſiege.

The cruelties exerciſed upon the proteſtants were as ſhocking as unneceſſary; ſoldiers were permitted to pillage them without redreſs, and they were compelled to accept baſe money in exchange for thoſe commodities they were forced to ſell. But their ſufferings were ſoon to have a period. The duke of Schomberg was ſent over with aſſiſtance; and William himſelf ſoon after followed, and landed at Carrickfergus. He was met by numbers of the proteſtants who had fled from perſecution; and now, at the head of ſix-and-thirty thouſand men, he was reſolved to go in queſt of the enemy. Having marched to Dundalk, and then to Ardee, he at length came in ſight of the Iriſh army. The river Boyne lay between the two armies, the front of the Iriſh being ſecured by a moraſs and a riſing ground. Theſe obſtacles were inſufficient to prevent the ardor of William, who, when his friend the duke of Schomberg expoſtulated upon the danger, boldly replied. That a tardy victory would be worſe than a defeat. The duke, finding his advice not reliſhed, retired to his tent in a melancholy manner, as if he had a preſcience of his own misfortune. Early in the morning, at ſix, king William gave orders to paſs the river: the army paſſed in three different places, and the battle began with unuſual vigor. The Iriſh troops, which have been reckoned the beſt in Europe abroad, have always

* *A. D.* 1689.

fought indifferently at home: they fled, after a long reſiſtance, with precipitation, and left the French and Swiſs regiments, who came to their aſſiſtance, to make the beſt retreat they could. William led on his horſe in perſon, and contributed, by his activity and vigilance, to ſecure the victory. James was not in the battle, but ſtood aloof, during the action, on the hill of Dunmore, ſurrounded with ſome ſquadrons of horſe; and, at intervals, was heard to exclaim, when he ſaw his own troops repulſing the enemy, *O ſpare my Engliſh ſubjects!* The Iriſh loſt about fifteen hundred men, and the Engliſh about one-third of that number; but the death of the duke of Schomberg, who was ſhot as he was croſſing the water, ſeemed to outweigh all the numbers of the enemy. He had been long a ſoldier of fortune, and fought under almoſt every power in Europe. His ſkill in war was unparalleled, and his fidelity equal to his courage. The number of battles in which he had been perſonally engaged, was ſaid to equal the number of his years; and he died aged eighty-two. James fled, regardleſs of the ſafety of his ſoldiers. William rode round the ſcene of ſlaughter, relieving the wounded, as well of the enemy's troops as his own. O'Regan, an old Iriſh captain, was heard to ſay upon this occaſion, That, if the Engliſh would exchange generals, the conquered army would fight the battle over again.

This blow totally depreſſed the hopes of James: he fled to Dublin, adviſed the magiſtrates to get the beſt terms they could from the victor, then

ſet out for Waterford, where he embarked for France, in a veſſel prepared for his reception. Had he poſſeſſed either conduct or courage, he might ſtill have headed his troops, and fought with advantage; but prudence forſook him with good fortune.

His friends were ſtill reſolved to ſecond his intereſts, though he had abandoned them himſelf. After his retreat, another deſperate battle was fought at Aughrim, in which his adverſaries were again victorious. Limerick, a ſtrong city in the ſouthern part of the kingdom, ſtill held out in his favor. The city was beſieged *, and made a brave defence; but, deſpairing of the king's fortunes, the garriſon at length capitulated. The Roman catholics, by this capitulation, were reſtored to the enjoyment of ſuch liberty in the exerciſe of their religion, as they had poſſeſſed in the reign of Charles II, and about fourteen thouſand of thoſe who had fought in favor of king James, had permiſſion to go over to France, and tranſports were provided for their reception.

The conqueſt of Ireland being thus completed, the only hopes of the fugitive king now depended on the aſſiſtance of Lewis XIV, who promiſed to make a deſcent upon England in his favor. The French king was punctual; he ſupplied the fugitive monarch with an army conſiſting of a body of French troops, ſome Engliſh and Scotch refugees, and the Iriſh regiments which had been tranſported from Limerick into France, by

* *A. D.* 1691.

long diſcipline now become excellent ſoldiers. This army was aſſembled between Cherbourg and La Hogue: king James commanded it in perſon; and more than three hundred tranſports were provided for landing it on the Engliſh ſhore. Tourville, the French admiral, at the head of ſixty-three ſhips of the line, was appointed to favor the deſcent, and had orders to attack the enemy, if they ſhould attempt to oppoſe him. All things conſpired to revive the hopes of the hitherto unfortunate king.

Theſe preparations on the ſide of France were ſoon known at the court of England*, and precautions were taken for a vigorous oppoſition: all the ſecret machinations of the baniſhed king's adherents were early diſcovered to the Engliſh miniſtry by ſpies, and they took proper meaſures to defeat them. Admiral Ruſſel was ordered to put to ſea with all poſſible expedition; and he ſoon appeared with ninety-nine ſhips of the line, beſide frigates and fireſhips. Both fleets met at La Hogue. On the ſucceſs of this engagement all the hopes of James depended; but the victory was on the ſide of the Engliſh, and of numbers. The combat continued ten hours, and the purſuit two days. Fifteen French men of war were deſtroyed; and the blow was ſo deciſive, that from that time France ſeemed to relinquiſh her claims to the ocean.

James was now reduced to the loweſt ebb of deſpondence: his deſigns upon England were quite fruſtrated: nothing was now left his

* *A. D.* 1692.

friends but terrors and deſpair, or the hopes of aſſaſſinating the monarch on the throne. Theſe baſe attempts, as barbarous as they were uſeleſs, were not entirely diſagreeable to the temper of James: it is ſaid, he encouraged and propoſed them; but they all ended in the deſtruction of their undertakers. He paſſed the reſt of his days at St. Germains, a penſioner on the bounties of Lewis, and aſſiſted by occaſional liberalities from his daughter, and friends in England. He died in 1700, at St. Germains. Some pretend that miracles were wrought at his tomb. We have ſeen few depoſed kings that have not died with a reputation for ſanctity.

The defeat at La Hogue confirmed king William's ſafety and title to the crown; the jacobites were now a feeble and a diſunited faction: new parties therefore aroſe among thoſe who had been friends of the revolution, and William found as much oppoſition from his parliament at home, as from the enemy in the field. His chief motive for accepting the crown was to engage England more deeply in the concerns of Europe. It had ever been his ambition to humble the French, whom he conſidered as the moſt formidable enemies of that liberty which he idolized; and all his politics lay in making alliances againſt them. Many of the Engliſh, on the other hand, had neither the ſame animoſity againſt the French, nor the ſame terrors of their increaſing power; they therefore conſidered the intereſts of the nation as ſacrificed to foreign connexions, and complained, that the war on the continent fell moſt

heavily on them, though they had the leaſt intereſt in its ſucceſs. To theſe motives of diſcontent was added his partiality to his own countrymen, in prejudice of his Engliſh ſubjects, together with his proud reſerve and ſullen ſilence, ſo unlike the behaviour of all their former kings. William heard their complaints with the moſt phlegmatic indifference; the intereſt of Europe alone employed all his attention: but while he inceſſantly watched over the ſchemes of contending kings and nations, he was unmindful of the cultivation of internal polity. Patriotiſm was ridiculed as an ideal virtue; the practice of bribing a majority in parliament became univerſal. The example of the great was caught up by the vulgar: all principle, and even decency, was gradually baniſhed; talents lay uncultivated; and the ignorant and profligate were received into favor.

William, upon accepting the crown, was reſolved to preſerve, as much as he was able, the privileges of a ſovereign. He was, as yet, entirely unacquainted with the nature of a limited monarchy, which was not then thoroughly underſtood in any part of Europe, except in England alone; he therefore often controverted the views of his parliament, and was directed by arbitrary councils. One of the firſt inſtances of this was in the oppoſition he gave to the bill for triennial parliaments; it had paſſed the two houſes, and was ſent up to receive the royal aſſent, which William refuſed to grant: the commons then voted, that whoever adviſed the king to this meaſure was an enemy to his

country. The bill, thus rejected, lay dormant for another ſeaſon; and being again brought in, the king found himſelf obliged, though reluctantly, to comply. The ſame oppoſition, and the ſame ſucceſs, attended a bill for regulating trials in caſes of high treaſon, by which the accuſed was allowed a copy of his indictment, and a liſt of the names of his jury, two days before his trial, together with counſel to plead in his defence: that no perſon ſhould be indicted, but upon the oaths of two faithful witneſſes. This was one of the moſt ſalutary laws that had been long enacted; but while penal ſtatutes were mitigated on one hand, they were ſtrangely increaſed by a number of others.

The great buſineſs of the parliament, from this period, ſeemed to conſiſt in reſtraining corruption, and bringing ſuch to juſtice as had grown wealthy from the plunder of the public. The number of laws that were now enacted every ſeſſion ſeemed calculated for the ſafety of the ſubject; but, in reality, were ſymptoms of the univerſal corruption. The more corrupt the commonwealth, the more numerous are the laws.

William was willing to admit all the reſtraints they choſe to lay on the royal prerogative in England, upon condition of being properly ſupplied with the means of humbling the power of France. War, and foreign politics, were all he knew or deſired to underſtand. The ſums of money granted him for the proſecution of this war were incredible; and the nation, not contented with furniſhing him with

ſuch ſupplies as they were immediately capable of raiſing, involved themſelves in debts, which they have never ſince been able to diſcharge. For all this profuſion England received, in return, the empty reward of military glory in Flanders, and the conſciouſneſs of having given the Dutch, whom they ſaved, frequent opportunities of being ungrateful.

The treaty of Ryſwick, at length, put an end to a war, in which England had engaged without intereſt, and came off without advantage*. In the general pacification the only equivalent ſhe received, for her blood and treaſure, was the king of France's acknowledgment of king William's title to the crown.

The king, now freed from a foreign war, laid himſelf out to ſtrengthen his authority at home. He conceived hopes of keeping up the forces that were granted him in time of war, during the continuance of the peace; but he was not a little mortified to find that the commons had paſſed a vote, that all the forces in Engliſh pay, exceeding ſeven thouſand men, ſhould be forthwith diſbanded; and that thoſe retained ſhould be natural Engliſh ſubjects. A ſtanding army was this monarch's greateſt delight; he had been bred up in camps, and knew no other pleaſure but that of reviewing troops, or dictating to generals. He profeſſed himſelf therefore entirely diſpleaſed with the propoſal; and his indignation was kindled to ſuch a pitch, that he actually conceived a deſign of abandoning

* *A. D.* 1697.

the government. His miniſters, however, diverted him from this reſolution, and perſuaded him to conſent to paſſing the bill. Such were the altercations between the king and his parliament; which continued during his reign. He conſidered his commons as a ſet of men deſirous of power, and conſequently reſolved upon obſtructing all his projects. He ſeemed but little attached to any party in the houſe; he veered from whigs to tories, as intereſt, or immediate exigence, demanded. England he conſidered as a place of labor, anxiety, and altercation. He uſed to retire to his ſeat at Loo, in Holland, for thoſe moments which he dedicated to pleaſure or tranquillity. It was in this quiet retreat he planned the different ſucceſſions of Europe, and labored to undermine the politics of Lewis XIV, his inſidious rival in power and in fame. Againſt France his reſentment was ever levelled; and he had made vigorous preparations for entering into a new war with that kingdom, when death interrupted the execution of his ſchemes*. He was naturally of a very feeble conſtitution, and it was now almoſt exhauſted by a life of continual action and care. He endeavoured to conceal the increaſe of his infirmities, and repair his health by riding. In one of his excurſions to Hampton-court, his horſe fell under him, and he himſelf was thrown off with ſuch violence that his collar-bone was fractured. This, in a robuſt conſtitution, would have been a trifling misfortune, but to him it

* *A. D.* 1701.

was fatal. Perceiving his end approach, the objects of his former care ſtill lay next his heart; the intereſts of Europe ſtill filled him with concern. The earl of Albemarle arriving from Holland, he conferred with him in private on the poſture of affairs abroad. Two days after having received the ſacrament from archbiſhop Tenniſon, he expired, in the fifty-ſecond year of his age, after having reigned thirteen years.

William left behind him the character of a great politician, though he had never been popular; and a formidable general, though he was ſeldom victorious: his deportment was grave and ſullen, nor did he ſhow any fire, but in the day of battle. He deſpiſed flattery, yet loved dominion. Greater as the general of Holland, than the king of England; to one he was a father, to the other a ſuſpicious friend. He ſcrupled not to employ the engines of corruption to gain his ends; and while he increaſed the power of the nation he was brought to govern, he contributed, in ſome meaſure, to corrupt their morals.

LETTER XLIX.

THE diſtreſſes occaſioned by the death of princes are not ſo great, or ſo ſincere, as the ſurvivors would fondly perſuade us. The loſs of king William was, at firſt, thought irreparable; but the proſperity which the kingdom ſeemed to acquire under his ſucceſſor, queen Anne, ſhowed the contrary. This princeſs was the ſecond daughter of king James by his firſt

wife: ſhe was, by the mother's ſide, deſcended from chancellor Hyde, afterward earl of Clarendon; and had been married to the prince of Denmark, before her acceſſion to the crown. She aſcended the throne in the thirty-eighth year of her age, having undergone many viciſſitudes after the expulſion of her father, and many ſevere mortifications during the reign of the late king; but naturally poſſeſſed of an even, ſerene temper, ſhe either was inſenſible of the diſreſpect ſhown her, or had wiſdom to conceal her reſentment.

She came to the throne with the ſame hoſtile diſpoſition toward France in which the late monarch died. She was wholly guided by the counteſs of Marlborough, a woman of maſculine ſpirit, and remarkable for intrigue, both in politics and gallantry. This lady adviſed a vigorous exertion of the Engliſh power againſt France, as ſhe had already marked the earl, her huſband, for conducting all the operations both in the cabinet and the field. Thus influenced, the queen took early meaſures to confirm her allies, the Dutch, with aſſurances of union and aſſiſtance.

Lewis XIV, now grown familiar with diſappointment and diſgrace, yet ſtill ſpurring on an exhauſted kingdom to ſecond the views of his ambition, expected, from the death of king William, a field open for conqueſts and glory. The vigilance of his late rival had blaſted his laurels, and circumſcribed his power; for, even after a defeat, William ſtill was formidable. At the news of his death, therefore,

the French monarch could not ſuppreſs his joy, and his court at Verſailles ſeemed to have forgotten its uſual decorum in the ſincerity of their rapture. But their pleaſure was ſoon to terminate; a much more formidable enemy was now riſing up to oppoſe them; a more able warrior, and one backed by the efforts of an indulgent miſtreſs and a willing nation.

Immediately upon the queen's acceſſion, war was declared againſt the French king, and that monarch was accuſed of attempting to unite the crown of Spain to his own dominions, by placing his grandſon upon the throne of that kingdom; thus attempting to deſtroy the equality of power among the ſtates of Europe. This declaration was ſoon ſeconded with vigorous efforts; an alliance was formed between the Imperialiſts, the Dutch, and the Engliſh, who contributed more to the ſupport of the war than the other two united. Marlborough was ſent over to command the Engliſh army, and the allies declared him generaliſſimo of all their forces. Never was a man better calculated for debate and action than he; ſerene in the midſt of danger, and cool in all the fury of battle. While his counteſs governed the queen, his intrigues governed the kingdom. An indefatigable warrior while in camp, and a ſkilful politician in courts; he thus became the moſt fatal enemy to France that England had produced ſince the conquering times of Creſſy and Agincourt.

This general had learned the art of war under the famous marſhal Turenne, having been a volunteer in his army. He, at that time, went

by the name of the *Handſome Engliſhman;* but Turenne foreſaw his future greatneſs. He gave the firſt proofs of his wiſdom by advancing the ſubaltern officers, whoſe merit had hitherto been neglected: he gained the enemy's poſts without fighting, ever advancing, and never loſing one advantage which he had gained *. To this general was oppoſed, on the ſide of France, the duke of Burgundy, grandſon of the king; a youth more qualified to grace a court, than conduct an army: the marſhal Boufflers commanded under him, a man of courage and activity. But theſe qualifications in both were forced to give way to the ſuperior powers of their adverſary: after having been forced to retire by the ſkilful marches of Marlborough, after having ſeen ſeveral towns taken, they gave up all hopes of acting offenſively, and concluded the campaign with reſolutions to proſecute the next with greater vigor.

Marlborough, upon his return to London, received the rewards of his merit, being thanked by the houſe of commons, and created a duke by the queen. The ſucceſs of one campaign but ſpurred on the Engliſh to aim at new triumphs. Marlborough next ſeaſon returned to the field, with larger authority, and greater confidence from his former ſucceſs. He began the campaign by taking Bonne, the reſidence of the elector of Cologne; he next retook Huys, Limbourg, and became maſter of all the Lower Rhine **. The marſhal Villeroy, ſon to the king

* *A. D.* 1704. ** *A. D.* 1706.

of France's governor, and educated with him, was now general of the French army. He was ever a favorite of Lewis, and had ſhared his pleaſures and his campaigns. He was brave, virtuous, and polite, but unequal to the great taſk of command; and ſtill more ſo, when oppoſed to ſo great a rival.

Marlborough, ſenſible of the abilities of his antagoniſt, was reſolved, inſtead of immediately oppoſing him, to fly to the ſuccour of the emperor, his ally, who loudly requeſted his aſſiſtance, being preſſed on every ſide by a victorious enemy. The Engliſh general, who was reſolved to ſtrike a vigorous blow for his relief, took with him about thirteen thouſand Engliſh troops, traverſed extenſive countries by haſty marches, arrived at the banks of the Danube, defeated a body of French and Bavarians ſtationed at Donawert to oppoſe him, paſſed the Danube, and laid the dukedom of Bavaria, that had ſided with the French, under contribution. Villeroy, who at firſt attempted to follow his motions, ſeemed, all at once, to have loſt ſight of his enemy; nor was he apprized of his route till he was informed of his ſucceſſes.

Marſhal Tallard prepared, by another route, to obſtruct the duke of Marlborough's retreat, with thirty thouſand men. He was ſoon after joined by the duke of Bavaria's forces; ſo that the French army amounted to a body of ſixty thouſand diſciplined veterans, commanded by the two beſt reputed generals at that time in France. Tallard had eſtabliſhed his reputation by

by former victories; he was active, penetrating, and had risen by the dint of merit alone. But this ardor often rose to impetuosity; and he was so shortsighted, as to be unable to distinguish at the smallest distance. On the other hand, the duke of Marlborough was now joined by prince Eugene, a general bred up from his infancy in camps, and equal to Marlborough in intrigue and military knowledge. Their talents were congenial; and all their designs seemed to flow but from one source. Their army, when combined, amounted to about fifty-two thousand men; troops that had been accustomed to conquer, and had seen the French, the Turks, and the Russians, fly before them. As this battle, both from the talents of the generals, the improvements in the art of war, the number and discipline of the troops, and the greatness of the contending powers, is reckoned the most remarkable of this century, it demands a more particular detail.

The French were posted on a hill, their right being covered by the Danube and the village of Blenheim, and commanded by marshal Tallard; their left was defended by a village, and headed by the elector and Marsin, an experienced French general. In the front of their army ran a rivulet, the banks of which were steep, and the bottom marshy. Marlborough and Eugene went together to observe the posture of the French forces. Notwithstanding their advantageous situation, they were resolved to attack them immediately. The battle began between twelve and one in the afternoon. Marlborough, at the head of

the Engliſh troops, having paſſed the rivulet, attacked the cavalry of Tallard in the right. This general was at that time reviewing the diſpoſition of his troops in the left; and the cavalry fought for ſome time without the preſence of their general. Prince Eugene, on the left, had not yet attacked the forces of the elector; and it was an hour before he could bring his forces up to the engagement.

Tallard had no ſooner underſtood that his right was attacked by the duke, but he flew to its head. He found the furious encounter already begun, his cavalry thrice repulſed, and rallied as often. He had a large body of forces in the village of Blenheim; he made an attempt to bring them to the charge. They were attacked by a part of Marlborough's forces ſo vigorouſly, that, inſtead of aſſiſting the main body, they could hardly maintain their ground. All the French cavalry, being now attacked in flank, was totally defeated. The Engliſh army, thus half victorious, pierced up between the two bodies of the French, commanded by the marſhal and the elector, while at the ſame time the forces in the village of Blenheim were ſeparated by another detachment. In this terrible ſituation, Tallard flew to rally ſome ſquadrons, but, from his ſhortſightedneſs, miſtaking a detachment of the enemy for his own, he was taken priſoner by the Heſſian troops, who were in Engliſh pay. In the mean time, prince Eugene on the left, after having been thrice repulſed, put the enemy into confuſion. The rout then became general, and the flight precipitate. The

conſternation was ſuch, that the French ſoldiers threw themſelves into the Danube without knowing where they fled: the officers loſt all their authority; there was no general left to ſecure a retreat. The allies were now maſters of the field of battle, and ſurrounded the village of Blenheim, where a body of thirteen thouſand men had been poſted in the beginning of the action, and ſtill kept their ground. Theſe troops ſeeing themſelves cut off from all communication from the reſt of the army: threw down their arms, and ſurrendered themſelves priſoners of war. Thus ended the battle of Blenheim, one of the moſt complete victories that was ever obtained. Twelve thouſand French and Bavarians were ſlain in the field, or drowned in the Danube; thirteen thouſand were made priſoners of war. Of the allies about five thouſand men were killed, and eight thouſand wounded or taken.

The loſs of the battle is imputed to two capital errors committed by marſhal Tallard; firſt weakening the centre, by detaching ſuch a number of troops to the village of Blenheim; and then ſuffering the confederates to paſs the rivulet, and form unmoleſted. The next day, when the duke of Marlborough viſited his priſoner, the marſhal paid him the compliment of having overcome the beſt troops in the world. *I hope, ſir*, replied the duke, *you will except thoſe by whom they were conquered.*

A country of a hundred leagues in extent fell, by this defeat, into the hands of the victor.

Having thus ſucceeded beyond his hopes, the

duke once more returned to England, where he found the people in a tranſport of joy: he was welcomed as a hero who had retrieved the glory of the nation; and the queen, the parliament, and the people, were ready to ſecond him in all his deſigns. The manor of Woodſtock was conferred upon him for his ſervices; and the lord-keeper, in the name of the peers, honored him with that praiſe he ſo well deſerved *.

The ſucceſs of the laſt campaign induced the Engliſh to increaſe their ſupplies for the next, and the duke had fixed upon the Moſelle for the ſcene of action; but being diſappointed by prince Lewis, who promiſed his aſſiſtance, he returned to the Netherlands to oppoſe Villeroy, who, in his abſence, undertook the ſiege of Liege. Villeroy having received advice of the duke's approach, abandoned his enterpriſe, and retreated within his lines. Marlborough was reſolved to force them. He led his troops to the charge; after a warm, but ſhort engagement, the enemy's horſe were defeated with great ſlaughter. The infantry being abandoned, retreated in great diſorder to an advantageous poſt, where they again drew up in order of battle. Had the duke been permitted to take advantage of their conſternation as he propoſed, it is poſſible he might have gained a complete victory; but he was oppoſed by the Dutch officers, who repreſented it in ſuch a light to the Deputies of the States, that they refuſed to

* *A. D.* 1706.

conſent to its execution. This timidity was highly reſented in England, and laid the firſt foundation of ſuſpecting the Dutch fidelity: they were ſecretly accuſed of a deſire to protract the war, by which they alone, of all the powers in Europe, were gainers.

While the arms of England were crowned with ſucceſs in the Netherlands, they were not leſs fortunate in Spain, where efforts were made to fix Charles, duke of Auſtria, upon the throne. The greateſt part of that kingdom had declared in favor of Philip IV, grandſon to Lewis XIV, who had been nominated ſucceſſor by the late king of Spain's will. We have already ſeen, that, by a former treaty among the powers of Europe, Charles of Auſtria was appointed heir to that crown; and this treaty had been guaranteed by France herſelf, who now intended to reverſe it in favor of a deſcendant of the houſe of Bourbon. Charles therefore entered Spain, aſſiſted by the arms of England, and invited by the Catalonians, who had declared in his favor. He was furniſhed with two hundred tranſports, thirty ſhips of war, nine thouſand men; and the earl of Peterborough, a man of even romantic bravery, was placed at their head.

One of the firſt exploits of theſe forces was to take Gibraltar, which had hitherto been deemed impregnable. A ledge of lofty rocks defended it almoſt on every ſide by land, and an open and ſtormy bay took away all ſecurity for ſhipping by ſea; a few troops were therefore capable of defending it againſt the moſt

numerous armies. The ſecurity of the garriſon proved their ruin. A detachment of eighteen hundred marines were landed upon that neck of level ground which joins it to the continent. Theſe were incapable of attempting any thing effectual, and even deſtitute of hopes of ſucceeding. A body of ſailors, in boats, were ordered to attack a half-ruined mole: they took poſſeſſion of the platform, unterrified by a mine that blew up a hundred men in the air: with the utmoſt intrepidity they kept their ground, and, being ſoon joined by other ſeamen, took a redoubt, between the mole and the town, by ſtorm. The governor was now obliged to capitulate; and the prince of Heſſe entered the town, amazed at the ſucceſs of ſo deſperate an enterpriſe. This was a glorious and an uſeful acquiſition to the Britiſh dominions: their trade to the Mediterranean was thus ſecured; and they had here a repoſitory capable of containing all things neceſſary for the repairing of fleets, or the equipment of armies.

Soon after the taking this important garriſon, the Engliſh fleet, now miſtreſs of the ſeas, attacked the French admiral, who commanded fifty-two ſhips of war. After an obſtinate conteſt, the Engliſh became victorious; the French fleet ſailed away, nor could it be brought again to the engagement, though the loſſes on either ſide were equal. This may be reckoned the final effort of France by ſea: in all ſubſequent engagements their chief care was rather to conſult means of eſcape than of victory. Nor yet were the French and Spaniards willing to ſuffer

Gibraltar to be taken, without an effort for repriſal. Philip ſent an army to retake it, and France a fleet of thirteen ſhips of the line: both were equally unſucceſsful; part of the fleet was diſperſed by a tempeſt, and another part taken by the Engliſh; while the army, having made little or no progreſs by land, was obliged to abandon the enterpriſe.

Nor were the Engliſh leſs ſucceſsful in aſſerting the title of Charles to the kingdom. Their army was commanded by the earl of Peterborough, one of the moſt ſingular and extraordinary men of the age. At fifteen he fought againſt the Moors in Africa: at twenty he aſſiſted in compaſſing the revolution: he now carried on this war in Spain, almoſt at his own expenſe; and his friendſhip for the duke Charles was his ſtrongeſt motive to undertake it. He was deformed in perſon, but of a mind the moſt generous and active that ever inſpired a honeſt boſom. His firſt attempt in Spain was to beſiege Barcelona; a ſtrong city with a garriſon of five thouſand men, while his own army amounted to but ſeven thouſand. Never was an attempt more bold, or more fortunate. The operations began by a ſudden attack on fort Monjuce, ſtrongly ſituated on a hill that commanded the city. The outworks were taken by ſtorm: a ſhell chanced to fall into the body of the fort, and blew up the magazine of powder; the garriſon of the fort was ſtruck with conſternation, and ſurrendered without farther reſiſtance. The town ſtill remained unconquered: the Engliſh general erected batteries

againſt it, and, in a few days, the governor capitulated. During the interval of capitulation, the Germans and Catalonians in the Engliſh army had entered the town, and were plundering all before them. The governor thought himſelf betrayed: he upbraided the treachery of the general. Peterborough flew among the plunderers, drove them from their prey, and returned ſoon after coolly to finiſh the capitulation. The Spaniards were equally amazed at the generoſity of the Engliſh, and the baſeneſs of their own countrymen, who had led on to the ſpoil.

The conqueſt of all Valencia ſucceeded the taking of this important place: the enemy, after a defeated attempt to retake Barcelona, ſaw themſelves deprived of almoſt every hope; the party of Charles was increaſing every day; he became maſter of Arragon, Carthagena, and Grenada; the road to Madrid, their capital city, lay open before him; the earl of Galloway entered it in triumph, and there proclaimed Charles king of Spain without farther oppoſition.

The Engliſh had ſcarce time to rejoice at theſe ſucceſſes of their arms, when their attention was turned to new victories in Flanders. The duke of Marlborough had early commenced the campaign, and brought an army of eighty thouſand men into the field, and ſtill expected reinforcements from Denmark and Pruſſia. The court of France was reſolved to attack him before this junction. Villeroy, who commanded an army conſiſting of eighty thouſand men, near Tirlemont, had orders to engage. He

accordingly drew up his forces in a ſtrong camp; his right was flanked by the river Mehaigne, his left was poſted behind a marſh, and the village of Ramilies lay in the centre. Marlborough, who perceived this diſpoſition, drew up his army accordingly. He knew that the enemy's left could not paſs the marſh, to attack him, but at a great diſadvantage; he therefore weakened his troops on that quarter, and thundered on the centre with ſuperior numbers. They ſtood but a ſhort time in the centre, and at length gave way on all ſides. The horſe abandoned their foot, and were ſo cloſely purſued, that almoſt all were cut in pieces. Six thouſand men were taken priſoners, and about eight thouſand were killed or wounded. This victory was almoſt as ſignal as that of Blenheim; Bavaria and Cologne were the fruits of one, and all Brabant was gained by the other. The French troops were diſpirited, and the city of Paris overwhelmed with conſternation. Lewis XIV, who had long been flattered with conqueſt, was now humbled to ſuch a degree as almoſt to excite the compaſſion of his enemies: he intreated for peace, but in vain; the allies carried all before them, and his very capital dreaded the approach of the conquerors. What neither his power, his armies, nor his politics, could effect, a party in England performed; and the diſſenſion between the whigs and the tories ſaved the dominions of France, that now ſeemed ready for ruin.

LETTER L.

QUEEN Anne's councils had hitherto been governed by a whig miniſtry; they ſtill purſued the ſchemes of the late king, and, upon republican principles, ſtrove to diffuſe freedom throughout Europe. In a government, where the reaſoning of individuals, retired from power, generally leads thoſe who command, the deſigns of the miniſtry muſt change, as the people happen to alter. The queen's perſonal virtues, her ſucceſſes, her adulation from the throne, contributed all to change the diſpoſition of the nation; they now began to defend hereditary ſucceſſion, nonreſiſtance, and divine right; they were now become tories, and were ready to contravene the deſigns of a whig miniſtry, whenever a leader offered to conduct them to the charge.

Theſe diſcontents were, in ſome meaſure, increaſed by a meditated union between the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. The treaty for this purpoſe was chiefly managed by the miniſtry; and although it was fraught with numberleſs benefits to either kingdom, yet it raiſed the murmurs of both. The Engliſh expected nothing from the union of ſo poor a nation, but a participation of their neceſſities; they thought it unjuſt, that, while Scotland was granted an eighth part of the legiſlature, it yet ſhould be taxed but a fortieth part of the ſupplies. On the other hand, the Scots conſidered that their independency would be quite

deſtroyed, and the dignity of their crown betrayed; they dreaded an increaſe of taxes, and ſeemed not much to eſteem the advantages of an increaſed trade. In every political meaſure there are diſadvantages on either ſide, which may be ſufficient to deter the timid, but which a bold legiſlator diſregards. The union, after ſome ſtruggles, was effected *; Scotland was no longer to have a parliament, but to ſend ſixteen peers, choſen from the body of their nobility, and forty-five commoners. The two kingdoms were called by the common name of Great Britain; and all the ſubjects of both were to enjoy a communication of privileges and advantages.

This meaſure, which ſtrengthened the vigor of government by uniting its force, ſeemed to threaten the enemies of Great Britain with dangers abroad; but the diſcontents of the nation at home prevented the effects of its newly-acquired power. The tories, now become the majority, were diſpleaſed with the whig miniſtry; they looked with jealouſy on the power of the earl of Godolphin and the duke of Marlborough, who had long governed the queen, and laviſhed the treaſures of the nation on conqueſts more glorious than ſerviceable. To them the people imputed the burdens under which they now groaned, and others which they had reaſon to fear. The loſs of a battle near Almanza in Spain, where the Engliſh army were taken priſoners, under the command of the earl of Galloway,

* July 22, 1706.

with ſome other miſcarriages, tended to heighten their diſpleaſure, and diſpelled the inebriation of former ſucceſs. The tories did not fail to inculcate and exaggerate theſe cauſes of diſcontent, while Robert Harley, afterward earl of Oxford, and Henry St. John, made ſoon after lord Bolingbroke, ſecretly fanned the flame.

Harley had lately become a favorite of the queen: the petulance of the ducheſs of Marlborough, who formerly ruled the queen, had entirely alienated the affections of her miſtreſs; ſhe now placed them upon one Mrs. Maſham, who was entirely devoted to lord Oxford. Oxford was poſſeſſed of uncommon erudition; he was polite and intriguing; he had inſinuated himſelf into the royal favor, and determined to ſap the credit of Marlborough and his adherents. In this attempt, he choſe, for his ſecond, Bolingbroke, a man of exalted powers of thinking, eloquent, ambitious, and enterpriſing. Bolingbroke was, at firſt, contented to act a ſubordinate character in this meditated oppoſition; but ſoon perceiving the ſuperiority of his own talents, from being an inferior, he was reſolved to become lord Oxford's rival. The duke of Marlborough ſoon perceived their growing power, and reſolved to cruſh it in the beginning. He refuſed to join in the privy council, while Harley was ſecretary. Godolphin joined his influence in this meaſure; and the queen was obliged to appeaſe their reſentment by diſcharging Harley from his place: Bolingbroke was reſolved to ſhare his diſgrace, and voluntarily relinquiſhed his employments.

This violent meaſure, which ſeemed, at firſt, favorable to the whig miniſtry, laid the firſt foundation of its ruin; the queen was entirely diſpleaſed with the haughty conduct of the duke; and, from that moment, he loſt her confidence and affection. Harley was enabled to act now with leſs diſguiſe, and to take more vigorous meaſures for the completion of his deſigns. In him the queen repoſed all her truſt, though he now had no viſible concern in the adminiſtration.

The whig party, in this manner, ſeemed to triumph for ſome time, till an occurrence, in itſelf of no great importance, ſerved to ſhow the ſpirit of the times. Doctor Sacheverel, a miniſter of narrow intellects and bigotted principles, had publiſhed * two ſermons, in which he ſtrongly inſiſted on the illegality of reſiſting kings, and enforced the divine origin of their authority; declaimed againſt the diſſenters, and exhorted the church to put on the whole armour of God. There was nothing in the ſermons either nervous, well written, or clear; they owed all their celebrity to the complexion of the times, and are at preſent juſtly forgotten. Sacheverel was impeached by the commons, at the bar of the upper houſe; they ſeemed reſolutely bent upon puniſhing him, and a day was appointed for trying him before the lords at Weſtminſter-hall. Mean while, the tories, who, one and all, approved his principles, were as violent in his defence as the parliament had

* *A. D.* 1707.

been in his profecution. The eyes of the kingdom were turned upon this extraordinary trial; the queen herſelf was every day preſent as a private ſpectator. The trial laſted ſome days; and vaſt multitudes attended him each day, as he went to the hall, ſhouting and praying for his ſucceſs. The body of the people eſpouſed his cauſe. They deſtroyed ſeveral meeting-houſes, and plundered the dwellings of diſſenters; and the queen herſelf could not but reliſh thoſe doctrines which contributed to extend her prerogative. The lords were divided; they continued undetermined for ſome time; but at length, after much obſtinate diſpute and virulent altercation, Sacheverel was found guilty by a majority of ſeventeen voices. He was prohibited from preaching, for the term of three years; his two ſermons were ordered to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman. The lenity of this ſentence was conſidered, by the tories, as a victory; and, in fact, their faction took the lead all the remaining part of this reign.

The king of France, long perſecuted by fortune, and each hour fearing for his capital, once more petitioned for peace. Godolphin and Marlborough, who had, ſince the beginning of the war, enjoyed the double advantage of extending their glory, and increaſing their fortunes, were entirely averſe to any negotiation which tended to diminiſh both. The tories, on the other hand, willing to humble the general, and his partner Godolphin, were ſincerely deſirous of a peace, as the only meaſure to

attain their ends. A conference was, at length, begun at Gertrudenberg, under the influence of Marlborough, Eugene, and Zinzendorf, all three entirely averſe to the treaty. The French miniſters were ſubjected to every ſpecies of mortification; their conduct narrowly watched; their maſter inſulted; and their letters opened. They offered to ſatisfy every complaint that had given riſe to the war: they conſented to abandon Philip IV, in Spain; to grant the Dutch a large barrier; they even conſented to grant a ſupply toward dethroning Philip; but even this offer was treated with contempt, and at length the conference was broken off, while Lewis reſolved to hazard another campaign.

The deſigns of the Dutch, and the Engliſh general, were too obvious not to be ſeen, and properly explained by their enemies in England. The writers of the tory faction, who were men of the firſt rank in literary merit, diſplayed the avarice of the duke, and the ſelf-intereſted conduct of the Dutch: they inſiſted, that, while England was exhauſting her ſtrength in foreign conqueſts, ſhe was loſing her liberty at home; that her miniſters were not contented with ſharing the plunder of an impoveriſhing ſtate, but were reſolved upon deſtroying its liberties alſo. To theſe complaints were added the real pride of the then prevailing miniſtry, and the inſolence of the ducheſs of Marlborough, who hitherto had poſſeſſed more real power than the whole privy council united. Mrs. Maſham, who had firſt been recommended to the queen's favor by the ducheſs, now fairly ſupplanted

her patroneſs; and, by a ſteady attention to pleaſe the queen, had gained all that confidence which ſhe had repoſed in her former confidant. It was too late that the ducheſs perceived this alienation of the queen's favor, and now began to think of repairing it by demanding an audience of her majeſty, in order to vindicate her character from every ſuſpicion; but formal explanations ever widen the breach.

Mr. Hill, brother to the new favorite, was appointed by the queen to be colonel of a regiment; this the duke of Marlborough could by no means approve. He expoſtulated with his ſovereign; he retired in diſguſt: the queen, by a letter, gave him leave to diſpoſe of the regiment as he ſhould think proper; but, before it came to his hands, he had ſent a letter to the queen, deſiring ſhe would permit him to retire from his employments. This was the conjuncture which the tories had long wiſhed for, and which the queen herſelf was internally pleaſed with. She now perceived herſelf ſet free from an arbitrary combination, by which ſhe had been long kept in dependence. The earl of Godolphin, the duke's ſon-in-law, was diveſted of his office; and the treaſury ſubmitted to Harley, the antagoniſt of his ambition *. Lord Somers was diſmiſſed from being preſident of the council, and the earl of Rocheſter appointed in his room. In a word, there was not one whig left in any office of ſtate, except the duke of Marlborough; he retained his employments

* A. D. 1711.

for

for a ſhort time, unſupported and alone, an object of envy and factious reproach, till at length he found his cauſe irretrievable, and was obliged, after trying another campaign, to reſign, as the reſt of his party had done before.

As war ſeemed to have been the deſire of the whig party, ſo peace ſeemed to have been that of the tories. Through the courſe of Engliſh hiſtory, France ſeems to have been the peculiar object of the hatred of the whigs, and continual war with that nation has been their aim. On the contrary, the tories have been found to regard that nation with no ſuch oppoſition of principle; and a peace with France has generally been the reſult of a tory adminiſtration. For ſome time, therefore, a negotiation for peace had been carried on between the court of France and the new miniſters, who had a double aim in this meaſure; namely, to mortify the whigs and the Dutch, and to free their country from a ruinous war, which had all the appearance of becoming habitual to the conſtitution.

LETTER LI.

THE conferences for peace were firſt opened at London; and ſome time after the queen ſent the earl of Strafford as ambaſſador into Holland*, to communicate the propoſals which the French king had made toward the re-eſtabliſhment of the general tranquillity. The ſpirit of the times

* A. D. 1712.

was now changed: Marlborough's averſion to ſuch meaſures could no longer retard the negotiation; lord Strafford obliged the Dutch to name plenipotentiaries, and to receive thoſe of France. The treaty began at Utrecht; but as all the powers concerned in this conference, except France and England, were averſe to every accommodation, their diſputes ſerved rather to retard than accelerate a pacification. The Engliſh miniſtry, however, had foreſeen and provided againſt thoſe difficulties. Their great end was to free the ſubjects from a long, unprofitable war; a war where conqueſt could add nothing to their power, and a defeat might be prejudicial to internal tranquillity. As England had borne the chief burden of the war, it was but juſt to expect that it would take the lead in dictating the terms of peace. There were, however, three perſons of very great intereſt and power, who labored, by every art, to protract the negotiation; thoſe were the duke of Marlborough, prince Eugene, and Heinſius, the Dutch grand penſionary. Prince Eugene even came over to London, in order to retard the progreſs of a peace, which ſeemed to interrupt his career of glory: he found at court ſuch a reception as was due to his merits and fame; but, at the ſame time, ſuch a repulſe as the propoſals he made ſeemed to deſerve.

This negotiation at London failing of effect, the allies practiſed every artifice to intimidate the queen, and blacken the character of her miniſters; to raiſe and continue a dangerous ferment among the people; to obſtruct her

councils and divulge her deſigns. Her miniſters were very ſenſible of their preſent dangerous ſituation; they perceived her health was daily impairing, and her ſucceſſor countenanced the oppoſite faction. In caſe of her death, they had nothing to expect but proſecution and ruin, for obeying her commands; their only way therefore was to give up their preſent employments, or haſten the concluſion of a treaty, the utility of which would be the beſt argument with the people in their favor. The peace therefore was haſtened; and this haſte, in ſome meaſure, relaxed the miniſters' obſtinacy, in inſiſting upon ſuch terms and advantages as they had a right to demand. Seeing that nothing was to be expected from the concurrence of the allies, the courts of London and Verſailles reſolved to enter into a private treaty, in which ſuch terms might be agreed on, as would enable both courts to preſcribe terms to the reſt of the contending powers.

In the mean time, the duke of Marlborough, having been depoſed from his office of general, the command of the Engliſh army in Flanders was given to the duke of Ormond; but, at the ſame time, private orders were given him not to act with vigor againſt an enemy, which was upon the point of being reconciled by more mild methods of treatment. The allies, thus deprived of the aſſiſtance of the Engliſh, ſtill continued their animoſity, and were reſolved to continue the war ſeparately: they had the utmoſt confidence in prince Eugene, their general; and, though leſſened by the defection of the Britiſh

forces, they were ſtill ſuperior to thoſe of the enemy, which were commanded by marſhal Villars, a man who ſeemed to poſſeſs all the great qualities, and all the foibles of his country, in a ſupreme degree; valiant, generous, alert, lively, boaſtful, and avaricious. The loſs of the Britiſh forces was ſoon ſeverely felt in the allied army. Villars attacked a ſeparate body of their troops encamped at Denain, under the command of the earl of Albemarle. Their intrenchments were forced, and ſeventeen battalions either killed or taken, the earl himſelf, and all the ſurviving officers, being made priſoners of war.

Theſe ſucceſſes of marſhal Villars ſerved to haſten the treaty of Utrecht. The Britiſh miniſters at the congreſs, reſponſible at once for their conduct to their queen, their country, and all Europe, neglected nothing that might have been ſerviceable either to the allies, or that might conduce to the public ſafety. They firſt ſtipulated that Philip V, who had been ſettled on the throne of Spain, ſhould renounce all right to the crown of France, the union of two ſuch powerful kingdoms being thought dangerous to the liberties of the reſt of Europe. They covenanted that the duke of Berry, his brother, the preſumptive heir to the crown of France, after the death of the dauphin, ſhould alſo renounce his right to the crown of Spain, in caſe he became king of France. The duke of Orleans was to make the ſame reſignation. To oblige men thus to renounce their rights might have been injuſtice; but, for every good acquired,

ſome inconvenience muſt be endured: theſe reſignations, in ſome meaſure, ſerved to calm the world tempeſted up by long war, and have ſince become the baſis of the law of nations, to which Europe profeſſes preſent ſubmiſſion.

By this treaty the duke of Savoy had the iſland of Sicily, with the title of king, with Feneſtrelles, and other places on the continent; which increaſe of power ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, drawn from the ſpoils of the French monarchy. The Dutch had that barrier granted them which they ſo long ſought after; and, if the houſe of Bourbon ſeemed ſtripped of ſome dominions, in order to enrich the duke of Savoy, on the other hand, the houſe of Auſtria was taxed to ſupply the wants of the Hollanders, who were put in poſſeſſion of the ſtrongeſt towns in Flanders. With regard to England, its glory and intereſts were ſecured. They cauſed the fortifications of Dunkirk to be demoliſhed, and its port to be deſtroyed. Spain gave up all right to Gibraltar and the iſland of Minorca. France reſigned Hudſon's Bay, Nova-Scotia, and Newfoundland; but they were left in poſſeſſion of Cape-Breton, and the liberty of drying their fiſh upon the ſhore. Among the articles which were glorious to the Engliſh, it may be obſerved, that the ſetting free thoſe who had been confined in the French priſons, for profeſſing the proteſtant religion, was not the leaſt. It was ſtipulated, that the emperor ſhould poſſeſs the kingdom of Naples, the duchy of Milan, and the Spaniſh Netherlands; that the king of Pruſſia ſhould have Upper Guelderland; and a time was

fixed for the emperor's acceding to theſe reſolutions*, for he had hitherto obſtinately refuſed to aſſiſt at the negotiation. Thus it appears, that the Engliſh miniſtry did juſtice to all the world; but their country refuſed it to them; they were branded with all the terms of infamy and reproach by the whig party, and accuſed of having given up the privileges and rights which England had to expect. Each party reviled the other in turn; the kingdom was divided into oppoſite factions, both ſo violent in the cauſe, that the truth, which both pretended to eſpouſe, was attained by neither; both were virulent, and both wrong. Theſe commotions, in ſome meaſure, ſerved ſtill more to impair the queen's health. One fit of ſickneſs ſucceeded another: nor did the conſolation of her miniſtry ſerve to allay her anxieties; for they now had fallen out among themſelves, the council chamber being turned into a theatre for the moſt bitter altercations. Oxford adviſed a reconciliation with the whigs, whoſe reſentment he now began to fear, as the queen's health appeared to be impaired. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, affected to ſet the whigs at defiance; profeſſed a warm zeal for the church, and mixed flattery with his other aſſiduities. Bolingbroke prevailed; lord Oxford, the treaſurer, was removed from his employment, and retired, meditating ſchemes of revenge, and new projects of re-eſtabliſhment. His fall was ſo ſudden, and ſo unexpected, that no plan was adopted for

* *A. D.* 1713.

ſupplying the vacancy occaſioned by his diſgrace. All was confuſion at court; and the queen had no longer force to ſupport the burden: ſhe ſunk into a ſtate of inſenſibility, and thus found refuge from anxiety in lethargic ſlumber. Every method was contrived to rouſe her from this ſtate, but in vain; her phyſicians deſpaired of her life. The privy council aſſembled upon this occaſion; the dukes of Somerſet and Argyll, being informed of the deſperate ſtate in which ſhe lay, entered that aſſembly without being ſummoned; the members were ſurpriſed at their appearance, but the duke of Shrewſbury thanked them for their readineſs to give their aſſiſtance at ſuch a critical juncture, and deſired them to take their places. They now took all neceſſary precautions for ſecuring the ſucceſſion in the houſe of Hanover, ſent orders to the heralds at arms, and to a troop of life-guards to be in readineſs to mount, in order to proclaim the elector of Brunſwick king of Great Britain.

On the thirtieth of July the queen ſeemed ſomewhat relieved by medicines, roſe from her bed, and, about eight, walked a little; when, caſting her eyes on the clock that ſtood in her chamber, ſhe continued to gaze for ſome time. One of the ladies in waiting aſked her what ſhe ſaw there more than uſual; to which the queen only anſwered by turning her eyes upon her with a dying look. She was ſoon after ſeized with a fit of the apoplexy, from which however ſhe was relieved by the aſſiſtance of doctor Mead. In this ſtate of ſtupefaction ſhe continued all night; ſhe gave ſome ſigns of life

between twelve and one next day, but expired the next morning, a little after ſeven *, having lived forty-nine years five months and ſix days; and having reigned more than twelve years with honor, equity, and applauſe.

This princeſs was rather amiable than great, rather pleaſing than beautiful; neither her capacity nor learning were remarkable. Like all thoſe of her family, ſhe ſeemed rather fitted for the private duties of life than a public ſtation; a pattern of conjugal affection, a good mother, a warm friend, and an indulgent miſtreſs. During her reign none ſuffered on the ſcaffold for treaſon; ſo that, after a long ſucceſſion of faulty or cruel kings, ſhe ſhines with particular luſtre. In her ended the line of the Stewarts; a family, the misfortunes and miſconducts of which are not to be paralleled in hiſtory; a family, who, leſs than men themſelves, ſeemed to expect from their followers more than manhood in their defence; a family demanding rather our pity than aſſiſtance, who never rewarded their friends, nor avenged them of their enemies.

LETTER LII.

THE nearer we approach to our own times, in this ſurvey of Engliſh hiſtory, the more important every occurrence becomes: our own intereſts are blended with thoſe of the ſtate; and the accounts of public welfare are but the

* *Auguſt* 1714.

tranſcript of private happineſs. The two parties which had long divided the kingdom, under the names of whig and tory, now ſeemed to alter their titles; the whigs being ſtyled Hanoverians, and the tories branded with the appellation of Jacobites. The former deſired to be governed by a king who was a proteſtant, though a foreigner; the latter, by a monarch of their own country, though a papiſt *. Of the two inconveniences, however, that ſeemed the leaſt, where religion ſeemed to be in no danger; and the Hanoverians prevailed.

The popiſh Jacobites had been long flattered with the hopes of ſeeing the ſucceſſion altered by the earl of Oxford; but by the premature death of the queen, all their expectations at once were blaſted: the diligence and activity of the privy council, in which the Hanoverian intereſt prevailed, completed their confuſion, and they now found themſelves without any leader to give conſiſtency to their deſigns, and force to their councils. Upon recollection they ſaw nothing ſo eligible as ſilence and ſubmiſſion; they hoped much from the aſſiſtance of France, and ſtill more from the vigor of the pretender.

Purſuant to the act of ſucceſſion, George I, ſon of Erneſt Auguſtus, firſt elector of Brunſwick, and Sophia, grand-daughter to James I, aſcended the Britiſh throne. His mature age, being now fifty-four years old; his ſagacity and experience, his numerous alliances, the general peace of Europe, all contributed to his ſupport,

* *A. D.* 1714.

and promiſed a peaceable and happy reign. His virtues, though not ſhining, were ſolid. He was of a very different diſpoſition from the Stewart family, whom he ſucceeded: they were known to a proverb for leaving their friends in diſtreſs; George on the contrary, ſoon after his arrival in England, uſed to ſay, *My maxim is never to abandon my friends; to do juſtice to all the world; and to fear no man.* To theſe qualifications he joined great application to buſineſs; but generally ſtudied more the intereſts of thoſe ſubjects he had left behind, than of theſe he came to govern.

The king firſt landed at Greenwich, where he was received by the duke of Northumberland, and the lords of the regency. From the landing place he walked to his houſe in the park, accompanied by a great number of the nobility, and other perſons of diſtinction, who had the honor to kiſs his hand as they approached. When he retired to his bedchamber, he ſent for thoſe of the nobility who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their zeal for his ſucceſſion; but the duke of Ormond, the lord chancellor, and lord Trevor, were not of the number: lord Oxford too, the next morning, was received with marks of diſapprobation; and none but the whig party were admitted into any ſhare of confidence. The king of a faction is but the ſovereign of half his ſubjects: of this, however, the monarch I ſpeak of did not ſeem ſenſible; it was his misfortune, as well as that of the nation, that he was hemmed round by men who ſoured him with all their intereſts and

prejudices: none now but the violent in faction were admitted into employment; and the whigs, while they pretended to ſecure for him the crown, were, with all poſſible diligence, abridging the prerogative. An inſtantaneous and total change was effected in all the offices of honor and advantage. The whigs governed the ſenate, and the court diſpoſed of all places at pleaſure: whom they would they oppreſſed; bound the lower orders of people with new and ſevere laws; and this they called liberty.

Theſe partialities, and this oppreſſion, ſoon raiſed diſcontents throughout the kingdom. The clamor of the church's being in danger was revived, jealouſies were harboured, and dangerous tumults raiſed in every part of the country. The party cry was, Down with the whigs! Sacheverel for ever! During theſe commotions in the pretender's favor, the prince himſelf continued a calm ſpectator on the continent, now and then ſending over his emiſſaries to inflame the diſturbances, to diſperſe his ineffectual manifeſtoes, and to delude the unwary. Copies of a printed addreſs were ſent to the dukes of Shrewſbury, Marlborough, Argyll, and other noblemen of the firſt diſtinction, vindicating the pretender's right to the crown, and complaining of the injuſtice that was done him by receiving a foreigner: yet, for all this, he ſtill continued to profeſs the trueſt regard to the catholic religion; and, inſtead of concealing his ſentiments on that head, gloried in his principles. It was the being a papiſt which had diſpoſſeſſed his father of the throne; and ſurely

the ſon could never hope to gain a crown by the very methods in which it was loſt! but an infatuation ſeemed for ever to attend the family.

However odious, at that time, the popiſh ſuperſtitions were to the people in general, yet the opinions of the diſſenters ſeemed ſtill more diſpleaſing. Religion was mingled with all political diſputes. The high-church party complained, that, under a whig adminiſtration, impiety and hereſy daily gained ground; that the prelates were at once negligent of religious concerns, and warm in purſuit of temporal bleſſings. A book written by doctor Samuel Clarke, in favor of Socinianiſm, was ſtrictly reprehended. The diſputes among the churchmen roſe to ſuch a height, that the miniſtry was obliged to interpoſe; and the clergy received orders to finiſh ſuch debates, and to intermeddle in affairs of ſtate no longer. Nothing, however, could be more impolitic in a ſtate, than to prohibit the clergy from diſputing with each other: by this means they become more animated in the cauſe of religion; and this may be aſſerted, that, whatever ſide they defend, they become wiſer and better as they carry on the cauſe. To ſilence their diſputes is to lead them into negligence; if religion be not kept up by oppoſition, it falls to the ground, nor longer becomes an object of public concern. Government, I ſay again, ſhould never ſilence diſpute, and ſhould never ſide with either diſputant.

A new parliament was now called, in which the whigs had by far the majority; all

prepoſſeſſed with the ſtrongeſt averſion to the tories, and led on by the king himſelf, who made no ſecret of his diſpleaſure. Upon their firſt meeting, he informed them, that the branches of the revenue granted for the ſupport of civil government, were not ſufficient for that purpoſe; he apprized them of the machinations of the pretender, and intimated, that he expected their aſſiſtance in puniſhing ſuch as had endeavoured to deprive him of that bleſſing which he moſt valued, the affection of his people. As the houſes were then diſpoſed, this ſerved to give them the alarm; and they outwent even the moſt ſanguine expectations of the moſt vindictive miniſtry.

Their reſentment began with arraigning lord Bolingbroke of high treaſon, and other high crimes and miſdemeanors. To this it was objected by one of the members of the houſe of commons, that nothing in the allegations laid to his charge amounted to high treaſon. To this there was no reply given; but, lord Coningſby ſtanding up, *The chairman*, ſaid he, *has impeached the hand, but I impeach the head; he has impeached the ſcholar, and I the maſter. I impeach Robert earl of Oxford, and earl Mortimer, of high treaſon, and other crimes and miſdemeanors.* When therefore this nobleman appeared the next day in the houſe of lords, he was avoided, by his brother peers, as infectious: he whoſe favor had been but a little before ſo earneſtly ſought after, was now rejected and contemned. When the articles were read againſt him in the houſe of peers,

ſome debates aroſe as to the nature of his indictment, which, however, were carried by his adverſaries, and the articles of impeachment approved by the houſe: he was therefore again impeached at the bar of the houſe of lords; and a motion was made, that he might loſe his ſeat, and be committed to cloſe cuſtody. The earl, now ſeeing a furious ſpirit of faction raiſed againſt him, and aiming at his head, was not wanting to himſelf upon this emergency, but ſpoke to the following purpoſe: *I am accuſed*, ſays he, *for having made a peace; a peace, which, bad as it is now repreſented, has been approved by two ſucceſſive parliaments. For my own part, I always acted by the immediate directions and command of the queen, my miſtreſs, and never offended againſt any known law. I am juſtified in my own conſcience, and unconcerned for the life of an inſignificant old man. But I cannot, without the higheſt ingratitude, remain unconcerned for the beſt of queens; obligation binds me to vindicate her memory. My lords, if miniſters of ſtate, acting by the immediate commands of their ſovereign, are afterward to be made accountable for their proceedings, it may, one day or other, be the caſe of all the members of this auguſt aſſembly. I do not doubt therefore, that, out of regard to yourſelves, your lordſhips will give me an equitable hearing; and I hope that, in the proſecution of this inquiry, it will appear, that I have merited, not only the indulgence, but alſo the favor of this government. My lords, I am now to take my leave of your lordſhips,*

and of this honorable houſe, perhaps, for ever! I ſhall lay down my life with pleaſure in a cauſe favored by my late dear royal miſtreſs. And when I conſider that I am to be judged by the juſtice, honor, and virtue of my peers, I ſhall acquieſce, and retire with great content. And, my lords, God's will be done! On his return from the houſe of lords to his own houſe, where he was for that night permitted to go, he was followed by a great multitude of people, crying out, High-church, Ormond, and Oxford for ever! Next day he was brought to the bar, where he received a copy of his articles, and was allowed a month to prepare his anſwer. Though doctor Mead declared, that, if the earl ſhould be ſent to the Tower, his life would be in danger, it was carried that he ſhould be ſent there, whither he was attended by a prodigious concourſe of people, who did not ſcruple to exclaim againſt his proſecutors. Tumults grew more frequent; and this only ſerved to increaſe the ſeverity of the legiſlature. An act was made, decreeing, that if any perſons, to the number of twelve, unlawfully aſſembled, ſhould continue together one hour, after being required to diſperſe by a juſtice of peace, or other officer, and heard the proclamation againſt riots read in public, they ſhould be deemed guilty of felony without benefit of the clergy. An act of this kind carries its own comment with it; legiſlators ſhould ever be averſe to enacting ſuch laws as leave the greateſt room for abuſe.

A committee was now appointed to draw up articles of impeachment, and prepare evidence

againſt him and the other impeached lords: he was confined in the Tower *, and there remained for two years; during which time the kingdom was in a continual ferment, ſeveral other lords who had broke out into actual rebellion, and were taken in arms, being executed for treaſon. The miniſtry ſeemed weary of executions; and he, with his uſual foreſight, preſented, upon this occaſion, a petition for coming to his trial: a day was therefore aſſigned him. The commons appointed a committee to inquire into the ſtate of the earl's impeachment, and demanded a longer time to prepare for the trial. The truth is, they had now begun to relax in their former aſperity; and the intoxication of party was not quite ſo ſtrong as when he had been firſt committed. At the appointed time the peers repaired to the court in Weſtminſter-hall, where lord Cowper preſided as lord ſteward. The commons were aſſembled, and the king and royal family aſſiſted at the ſolemnity. The priſoner was brought from the Tower, and his articles of impeachment read, with his anſwers and the replies of the commons. Sir Joſeph Jekyl, one of the agents for the commons, ſtanding up to enforce the firſt article of his lordſhip's accuſation, one of the lords, adjourning the houſe, obſerved, that much time would be conſumed in going through all the articles of the impeachment; that nothing more remained than for the commons to make good the two articles of high treaſon contained in his

* *A. D.* 1715.

charge;

charge; and that this would at once determine the trial. His advice was agreed to by the lords; but the commons delivered a paper, containing their reaſons for aſſerting it as their undoubted right to carry on the impeachment in the manner they thought moſt conducive to their aim: on the other hand, the houſe of lords inſiſted on their former reſolution, conſidering it as the privilege of every judge to hear each cauſe in the manner he thinks moſt fitting. The diſpute grew ſtill more violent; a meſſage was at length ſent to the commons, intimating, that the lords intended to proceed immediately to the earl of Oxford's trial; and ſoon after repairing to the hall of juſtice, they took their places. The commons, however, did not think fit to appear; and the earl, having waited a quarter of an hour at the bar, was diſmiſſed for want of accuſers. To this diſpute, perhaps, he owed his ſafety, though it is probable they would have acquitted him of high treaſon, as none of his actions could juſtly ſuffer ſuch an imputation. With the ſame acrimony proſecutions were carried on againſt lord Bolingbroke and the duke of Ormond; but they found ſafety in flight.

Such vindictive proceedings as theſe naturally excited indignation; the people groaned to behold a few great ones cloſe up all the avenues to royal favor, and rule the nation with rigor and partiality*. In Scotland the diſcontent broke forth, at length, into the flames of rebellion.

* *A. D.* 1715.

The earl of Mar, aſſembling three hundred of his own vaſſals, in the Highlands of Scotland, proclaimed the pretender at Caſtletown, and ſet up his ſtandard at Brae Mar, on the ſixth day of September; then aſſuming the title of lieutenant-general of the pretender's forces, he exhorted the people to take arms in defence of their lawful ſovereign. But theſe preparations were weak, and ill conducted; all the deſigns of the rebels were betrayed to the government, the beginning of every revolt repreſſed, the weſtern countries prevented from riſing, and the moſt prudent precautions taken to keep all ſuſpected perſons in cuſtody, or in awe. The earl of Derwentwater and Mr. Foſter took the field near the borders of Scotland; and, being joined by ſome gentlemen, proclaimed the pretender. Their firſt attempt was to ſeize upon Newcaſtle, in which they had many friends; but they found the gates ſhut upon them, and were obliged to retire to Hexham, while general Carpenter having aſſembled a body of dragoons, reſolved to attack them before their numbers were increaſed. The rebels had two methods of acting with ſucceſs; either marching immediately into the weſtern parts of Scotland, and there joining general Gordon, who commanded a ſtrong body of highlanders; or of croſſing the Tweed, and attacking general Carpenter, whoſe forces did not exceed nine hundred men. From their uſual infatuation neither of theſe ſchemes were put into execution; for, taking the rout another way, they left general Carpenter on one ſide, and reſolved to penetrate into England

by the weſtern border. They accordingly advanced, without either foreſight or deſign, as far as Preſton, where they firſt heard the news that general Wills was marching at the head of ſix regiments of horſe, and a battalion of foot, to attack them. They now therefore began to raiſe barricadoes, and to put the place in a poſture of defence, repulſing at firſt the attack of the king's army with ſome ſucceſs. Next day, however, general Wills was reinforced by the troops under Carpenter, and the rebels were inveſted on all ſides. Foſter, their general, ſent colonel Oxburgh with a trumpet to the Engliſh commander, to propoſe a capitulation. This, however, general Wills refuſed, alledging that he would not treat with rebels; and that all they could expect was, to be ſpared from immediate ſlaughter. Theſe were hard terms; but they were obliged to ſubmit. They accordingly laid down their arms, and were put under a ſtrong guard. Their leaders were ſecured, and led through London pinioned, and bound together, while the common men were confined at Cheſter and Liverpool.

While theſe unhappy circumſtances attended the rebels in England, the earl of Mar's forces, in the mean time, increaſed to the number of ten thouſand men, and he had made himſelf maſter of the whole county of Fife. Againſt him the duke of Argyll ſet out for Scotland, as commander in chief of the forces in North Britain; and aſſembling ſome troops in Lothian, returned to Stirling with all poſſible expedition. The earl of Mar heing informed of this,

at firſt retreated, but being joined ſoon after by ſome clans under the earl of Seaforth, and others under general Gordon, who had ſignalized himſelf in the Ruſſian ſervice, he reſolved to march forward toward England. The duke of Argyll, apprized of his intention, and being joined by ſome regiments of dragoons from Ireland, determined to give him battle in the neighbourhood of Dumblain, though his forces were by no means ſo numerous as thoſe of the rebel army. In the morning therefore of the ſame day on which the Preſton rebels had ſurrendered, he drew up his forces, which did not exceed three thouſand five hundred men, but found himſelf greatly outflanked by the enemy. The duke therefore perceiving the enemy making attempts to ſurround him, was obliged to alter his diſpoſition; which, on account of the ſcarcity of general officers, was not done ſo expeditiouſly as to be all formed before the rebels began the attack. The left wing therefore of the duke's army fell in with the centre of the enemy's, and ſupported the firſt charge without ſhrinking. This wing ſeemed, for a ſhort time, victorious, as they killed the chief leader of part of the rebel army. But Glengary, who was ſecond in command, undertook to inſpire his intimidated forces; and waving his bonnet, cried out ſeveral times, Revenge! This animated his men to ſuch a degree, that they followed him cloſe to the muzzles of the muſkets, puſhed aſide the bayonets with their targets, and with their broad ſwords did great execution. A total rout of

that wing of the royal army enſued, and general Witham, their commander, flying full ſpeed to Stirling, gave out that all was loſt. In the mean time, the duke of Argyll, who commanded in perſon on the right, attacked the left of the enemy, and drove them before him for two miles, though they often faced about, and attempted to rally. The duke, having thus entirely broke the left, and puſhed them over the river Allen, returned to the field, where he found that part of the rebel army which had been victorious; but inſtead of renewing the engagement, both armies continued to gaze at each other, neither caring to attack; till toward evening both ſides drew off, each boaſting of victory. Whichever might claim the triumph, it muſt be owned, that all the honor, and all the advantages of the day, belonged only to the duke of Argyll. It was ſufficient for him to have interrupted the enemy's progreſs; and delay was to them a defeat. The earl of Mar therefore ſoon found his diſappointments and loſſes increaſe. The caſtle of Inverneſs, of which he was in poſſeſſion, was delivered up to the king by lord Lovat, who had hitherto appeared in the intereſt of the pretender. The marquis of Tullibardine left the earl to defend his own country, and many of the clans, ſeeing no likelihood of coming ſoon to a ſecond engagement, returned home; for an irregular army is much eaſier led to battle, than induced to bear the fatigues of a campaign.

The pretender might now be convinced of the vanity of his expectations, in imagining that

the whole country would riſe up in his cauſe. His affairs were actually deſperate; yet, with the uſual infatuation of the family, he reſolved to hazard his perſon among his friends in Scotland, at a time when ſuch a meaſure was totally uſeleſs. Paſſing therefore through France in diſguiſe, and embarking in a ſmall veſſel at Dunkirk, he arrived, on the twenty-ſecond day of December, on the coaſt of Scotland with only ſix gentlemen in his retinue. Upon his arrival in Aberdeen, he was ſolemnly proclaimed, and ſoon after made his public entry into Dundee. In two days more, he came to Scoon, where he intended to have the ceremony of his coronation performed. He ordered thankſgivings for his ſafe arrival; enjoined the miniſters to pray for him in the churches; and, without the ſmalleſt ſhare of power, went through all the ceremonies of royalty, which were, at ſuch a juncture, perfectly ridiculous. After this unimportant parade, he reſolved to abandon the enterpriſe with the ſame levity with which it had been undertaken, and embarked again for France, together with the earl of Mar, and ſome others, in a ſmall ſhip that lay in the harbour of Montroſe; and in five days arrived at Gravelines. General Gordon, who was left commander in chief of the forces, with the aſſiſtance of the earl-marſhal, proceeded with them to Aberdeen, where he ſecured three veſſels to ſail northward, which took on board the perſons who intended to make their eſcape to the continent. In this manner the rebellion was ſuppreſſed; but the fury of the victors did

not ſeem in the leaſt to abate with ſucceſs. The law was now put in force, with all its terrors; and the priſons of London were crowded with thoſe deluded wretches, whom the miniſtry ſhowed no diſpoſition to ſpare. The commons, in their addreſs to the crown, declared they would proſecute, in the moſt vigorous manner, the authors of the rebellion; and their reſolutions were as ſpeedy as their meaſures were vindictive. The earls of Derwentwater, Nithſdale, Carnwath, and Wintown; the lords Widrington, Kenmuir, and Nairn, were impeached. The *habeas corpus* act was ſuſpended; and the rebel lords, upon pleading guilty, received ſentence of death. Nothing could ſoften the privy council; the houſe of lords even preſented an addreſs to the throne for mercy, but without effect. Orders were diſpatched for executing the earls of Derwentwater and Nithſdale, and the viſcount Kenmuir, immediately; the others were reſpited for three weeks longer. Nithſdale, however, eſcaped in women's clothes, which were brought him by his mother, the night before his intended execution. Derwentwater, and Kenmuir were brought to the ſcaffold on Tower-hill, at the hour appointed. Both underwent their ſentence with calmneſs and intrepidity, pitied by all, ſeemingly leſs moved themſelves than the ſpectators.

An act of parliament was alſo made for trying the private priſoners in London, and not in Lancaſhire, where they were taken in arms; which proceeding, was in ſome meaſure, an

alteration of the ancient conſtitution of the kingdom; when Foſter, Mackintoſh, and ſeveral others, were found guilty. Foſter, however, eſcaped from Newgate, and reached the continent in ſafety; and ſome time after alſo Mackintoſh, with ſome others, forced their way, having maſtered the keeper and turnkeys, and diſarmed the ſentinel. Four or five were hanged, drawn, and quartered; among whom was William Paul, a clergyman, who profeſſed himſelf a true and ſincere member of the church of England; but not of that ſchiſmatical church whoſe biſhops had abandoned their king. Such was the end of a rebellion, probably firſt inſpired by the rigor of the new whig miniſtry and parliament. In running through the viciſſitudes of human tranſactions, we too often find both ſides culpable; and ſo it was in this caſe. The royal party acted under the influences of partiality, rigor, and prejudice; gratified private animoſity under the maſk of public juſtice; and, in their pretended love of freedom, forgot humanity. On the other hand, the pretender's party aimed, not only at ſubverting the government, but the religion of the kingdom: bred a papiſt himſelf, he confided only in counſellors of his own perſuaſion; and moſt of thoſe who adhered to the cauſe, were men of indifferent morals, or bigotted principles. Clemency, however, in the government, at that time, would probably have extinguiſhed all the factious ſpirit which has hitherto diſturbed the peace of this country; for it has ever been the character of the Engliſh, that they are more eaſily led than driven into loyalty.

LETTER LIII.

IN a government ſo very complicated as that of England, it muſt neceſſarily change from itſelf; in a revolution of even a few years, as ſome of its weaker branches acquire ſtrength, or its ſtronger decline. At this period, the rich and noble ſeemed to poſſeſs a greater ſhare of power than they had done for ſome ages preceding; the houſe of commons became each day a ſtronger body, at once more independent on the crown and the people. It was now ſeen that the rich could at any time buy their election; and that while their laws governed the poor, they might be enabled to govern the law. The rebellion was now extinguiſhed; and the ſeverities which juſtice had inflicted, excited the diſcontent of many, whoſe humane paſſions were awakened as their fears began to ſubſide. This, ſerved as a pretext for continuing the parliament, and repealing the act by which they were to be diſſolved at the expiration of every third year. An act of this nature, by which a parliament thus extended their own power, was thought by many the ready means of undermining the conſtitution; for if they could with impunity extend their continuance for ſeven years, which was the time propoſed, they could alſo for life continue their power; but this, it was obſerved, was utterly incompatible with the ſpirit of legiſlation. The bill, however, paſſed both houſes; all objections to it were conſidered as diſaffection: and, in a ſhort time,

it received the royal ſanction. The people might murmur at this encroachment; but it was now too late for redreſs.

Domeſtic concerns being thus adjuſted, the king began to turn his thoughts to his Hanoverian dominions, and determined upon a voyage to the continent. Nor was he without his fears for his dominions there, as Charles XII, of Sweden profeſſed the higheſt diſpleaſure at his having entered into a confederacy againſt him in his abſence. Having therefore paſſed through Holland to Hanover, in order to ſecure his German territories, he entered into a treaty with the Dutch and the regent of France, by which they promiſed mutually to aſſiſt each other in caſe of invaſion; but the death of the Swediſh monarch, who was killed by a cannon-ball at the ſiege of Frederickſtadt, ſoon put an end to his diſquietudes from that quarter. However, his majeſty, to ſecure himſelf, as far as alliances could add to his ſafety, entered into various negotiations with the different powers of Europe; ſome were brought to accede by money, others by promiſes. Treaties of this kind ſeldom give any real ſecurity: they may be conſidered as mere political playthings; they amuſe for a while, and then are thrown neglected by, never more to be heard of, as nothing but its own internal ſtrength can guard a country from inſult.

Among other treaties concluded with ſuch intentions, was that called the *Quadruple Alliance*. It was agreed upon, between the Emperor, France, England, and Holland, that

the emperor ſhould renounce all pretenſions to the crown of Spain, and exchange Sardinia for Sicily with the duke of Savoy: that the ſucceſſion for the duchies of Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, ſhould be ſettled on the queen of Spain's eldeſt ſon, in caſe the preſent poſſeſſors ſhould die without male iſſue. This treaty was by no means favorable to the intereſts of England, as it interrupted the commerce with Spain; and as it deſtroyed the balance of power in Italy, by throwing too much into the hands of Auſtria. However, England fitted out a ſtrong ſquadron in order to bring Spain to terms, if that kingdom ſhould inſiſt upon its rights in Italy. The war between the emperor and the king of Spain was actually begun in that country; and the mediation of the king of England was rejected, as partial and unjuſt. It was therefore reſolved by the court of London to ſupport its negotiations with the ſtrongeſt reaſons; namely, thoſe of war. Sir George Byng ſailed to Naples with twenty-two ſhips of the line, where he was received as a deliverer, that city having been under the utmoſt terrors of an invaſion from Spain. Here the Engliſh admiral received intelligence, that the Spaniſh army amounting to thirty thouſand men, had landed in Sicily; wherefore he immediately determined to ſail thither, fully reſolved to purſue the Spaniſh fleet. Upon doubling Cape Faro, he perceived two ſmall Spaniſh veſſels, and purſuing them cloſely, they led him to their main fleet, which, before noon, he perceived in line of battle, amounting, in all, to twenty-ſeven

ſail. At ſight of the Engliſh, the Spaniſh fleet, though ſuperior in numbers, attempted to ſail away, as the Engliſh had, for ſome time, acquired ſuch expertneſs in naval affairs, that no other nation would venture to face them, except with manifeſt diſadvantage. The Spaniards ſeemed diſtracted in their councils, and acted with extreme confuſion: they made a running fight; but, notwithſtanding what they could do, all but three were taken. The admiral, during this engagement, acted with equal prudence and reſolution; and the king wrote him a letter with his own hand, approving his conduct. This victory neceſſarily produced the reſentment and complaints of the Spaniſh miniſters at all the courts of Europe, which induced England to declare war with Spain *; and the regent of France joined England in a ſimilar declaration. The duke of Ormond now, once more, hoped, by the aſſiſtance of cardinal Alberoni, the Spaniſh miniſter, to reſtore the pretender in England: he accordingly ſet ſail with ſome troops, and proceeded as far as Cape Finiſterre, where his fleet was diſperſed and diſabled by a violent ſtorm, which entirely fruſtrated the armament, and, from that time, the pretender ſeemed to loſe all hopes of being received in England. This blow of fortune, together with the bad ſucceſs of the Spaniſh arms in Sicily and elſewhere, once more induced them to wiſh for peace; and the king of Spain was at laſt contented to ſign the quadruple alliance.

A. D. 1718.

King George having thus, with equal vigor and deliberation, ſurmounted all the obſtacles he met with in his way to the throne, and uſed every precaution that ſagacity could ſuggeſt for ſecuring himſelf in it, again returned to England, where the addreſſes from both houſes were as loyal as he could expect. From addreſſing they turned to an object of the greateſt importance; namely, that of ſecuring the dependency of the Iriſh parliament upon that of Great Britain. Maurice Anneſley had appealed to the houſe of peers in England, from a decree of the houſe of peers in Ireland; which was reverſed. The Britiſh peers ordered the barons of the exchequer in Ireland to put Mr. Anneſley in poſſeſſion of the lands he had loſt by the decree in that kingdom. The barons obeyed this order, and the Iriſh houſe of peers paſſed a vote againſt them, as having attempted to diminiſh the juſt privileges of the parliament of Ireland; and, at the ſame time, ordered the barons to be taken under the cuſtody of the black rod. On the other hand, the houſe of lords in England reſolved, that the barons of the exchequer in Ireland had acted with courage and fidelity; and addreſſed the king to ſigniſy his approbation of their conduct, by ſome marks of his favor. To complete their intention, a bill was prepared, by which the Iriſh houſe of lords was deprived of all right of final juriſdiction. This was oppoſed in both houſes. In the lower houſe Mr. Pitt aſſerted, that it would only increaſe the power of the Engliſh peers, who already had too much. Mr. Hungerford

demonſtrated that the Iriſh lords had always exerted their power of finally deciding cauſes. The duke of Leeds produced fifteen reaſons againſt the bill; but, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, it was carried by a great majority, and received the royal aſſent. The kingdom of Ireland was not at that time ſo well acquainted with the nature of liberty, and its own conſtitution, as it is at preſent. Their houſe of lords might then conſiſt moſtly of men bred up in luxury and ignorance; neither ſpirited enough to make oppoſition, nor ſkilful enough to conduct it.

But this blow, which the Iriſh felt ſeverely, was not ſo great as that which England now began to ſuffer from that ſpirit of avarice and chicanery which had infected almoſt all ranks of people. In the year 1720, John Law, a Scotſman, had erected a company in France under the name of the Miſſiſippi, which at firſt promiſed the deluded people immenſe wealth, but too ſoon appeared an impoſture, and left the greateſt part of that nation in ruin and diſtreſs *. The year following, the people of England were deceived by juſt ſuch another project, which is remembered by the name of the South-ſea ſcheme; and was long felt by thouſands. To explain this as conciſely as poſſible, it is to be obſerved, that, ever ſince the revolution, the government not having ſufficient ſupplies granted by parliament; or, what was granted requiring time to be collected; they were obliged to borrow money from ſeveral different companies of

* *A. D.* 1721.

merchants, and, among the reſt, from that company which traded to the South Sea. In the year 1716, they were indebted to this company about nine millions and a half of money, for which they granted annually at the rate of ſix *per cent.* intereſt. As this company was not the only one to which the government was debtor, and paid ſuch large intereſt yearly, Sir Robert Walpole conceived a deſign of leſſening theſe national debts, by giving the ſeveral companies an alternative, either of accepting a lower intereſt, namely, five *per cent.* for their money, or of being paid the principal. The different companies choſe rather to accept of the diminiſhed intereſt than the capital; and the South-ſea company, accordingly, having made up their debt to the government ten millions, inſtead of ſix hundred thouſand pounds which they uſually received as intereſt, were ſatisfied with five hundred thouſand. In the ſame manner the governors and company of the bank, and other companies, were contented to receive a diminiſhed annuity for their ſeveral loans, all which greatly leſſened the debts of the nation. It was in this ſituation of things, that Sir John Blount, who had been bred a ſcrivener, and was poſſeſſed of all the cunning and plauſibility requiſite for ſuch an undertaking, propoſed to the miniſtry, in the name of the South-ſea company, to leſſen the national debt ſtill farther, by permitting the South-ſea company to buy up all the debts of the different companies, and thus to become the principal creditor of the ſtate. The terms offered the government were

extremely advantageous. The South-ſea company was to redeem the debts of the nation out of the hands of the private proprietors, who were creditors to the government, upon whatever terms they could agree on; and for the intereſt of this money, which they had thus redeemed, and taken into their own hands, they would be contented to be allowed for ſix years five *per cent.* and then the intereſt ſhould be reduced to four *per cent.* and be redeemable by parliament. For theſe purpoſes a bill paſſed both houſes; and as the directors of the South-ſea company could not of themſelves alone be ſuppoſed to be poſſeſſed of money ſufficient to buy up theſe debts of the government, they were empowered to raiſe it by opening a ſubſcription, and granting annuities to ſuch proprietors as ſhould think proper to exchange their creditors; namely, the crown for the South-ſea company, with the advantages that might be made by their induſtry. The ſuperior advantages with which theſe proprietors were flattered, by thus exchanging their property in the government funds for South-ſea company ſtock, were a chimerical proſpect of having their money turned to great advantage, by a commerce to the ſouthern parts of America, where it was reported that the Engliſh were to have ſome new ſettlements granted them by the king of Spain. The directors books therefore were no ſooner opened for the firſt ſubſcription, but crowds came to make the exchange; the deluſion ſpread; ſubſcriptions in a few days ſold for double the price they had been bought for.

The

The ſcheme ſucceeded, and the whole nation was infected with a ſpirit of avaricious enterpriſe. The infatuation prevailed; the ſtock increaſed to a ſurpriſing degree; but, after a few months, the people awaked from their delirium; they found that all the advantages to be expected were merely imaginary, and an infinite number of families were involved in ruin. Many of the directors, whoſe arts had raiſed theſe vain expectations, had amaſſed ſurpriſing fortunes: it was, however, one conſolation to the nation to find the parliament ſtripping them of their ill-acquired wealth; and orders were given to remove all directors of the South-ſea company from their ſeats in the houſe of commons, or the places they poſſeſſed under the government. The delinquents being puniſhed by a forfeiture of their eſtates, the parliament next converted its attention toward redreſſing the ſufferers. Several uſeful and juſt reſolutions were taken, and a bill was ſpeedily prepared for repairing the miſchief. Of the profits ariſing from the South-ſea ſcheme, the ſum of ſeven millions was granted to the ancient proprietors; ſeveral additions alſo were made to their dividends out of what was poſſeſſed by the company in their own right; the remaining capital ſtock alſo was divided among all the proprietors at the rate of thirty-three pounds *per cent.* In the mean time petitions from all parts of the kingdom were preſented to the houſe, demanding juſtice; and the whole nation ſeemed exaſperated to the higheſt degree. During theſe tranſactions, the king, with ſerenity and wiſdom,

preſided at the helm, influenced his parliament to purſue equitable meaſures, and, by his councils, endeavoured to reſtore the credit of the nation.

The diſcontents occaſioned by theſe public calamities, once more gave the diſaffected party hopes of riſing; but in all their councils they were weak, divided, and wavering. Their preſent deſigns, therefore, could not eſcape the vigilance of the king, who had emiſſaries in every court, and who had made, by his alliances, every potentate a friend to his cauſe. He was therefore informed by the duke of Orleans, regent of France, of a new conſpiracy againſt him by ſeveral perſons of diſtinction, which poſtponed his intended journey to Hanover. Among thoſe againſt whom the moſt poſitive evidence was obtained, was Chriſtopher Layer, a young gentleman of the Middle Temple. He was convicted of having inliſted men for the pretender's ſervice*, and received ſentence of death; which he underwent, after having been often examined, and having ſtrenuouſly refuſed, to the laſt, to diſcover his accomplices He was the only perſon who ſuffered death upon this occaſion; but ſeveral noblemen of high diſtinction were made priſoners upon ſuſpicion. The duke of Norfolk, Atterbury, biſhop of Rocheſter, lord Orrery, and lord North and Grey, were of this number. Of theſe, all but the biſhop of Rocheſter came off without puniſhment, the circumſtances not being ſufficient againſt them

* *A. D.* 1722.

for conviction. A bill was brought into the houſe of commons againſt him, although a peer; and though it met with ſome oppoſition, yet it was reſolved by a great majority, that he ſhould be deprived of his office and benefice, and baniſhed the kingdom for ever. The biſhop made no defence in the lower houſe, reſerving all his power to be exerted in the houſe of lords. In that aſſembly he had many friends; his eloquence, politeneſs, and ingenuity, had procured him many; and his cauſe being heard, a long and warm debate was the conſequence. As there was little againſt him but intercepted letters, which were written in cipher, the earl Pawlet inſiſted on the danger and injuſtice of departing, in ſuch caſes, from the fixed rules of evidence. The duke of Wharton, having ſummed up the depoſitions, and ſhown the inſufficiency of them, concluded with ſaying, That, let the conſequences be what they would, he hoped the luſtre of that houſe would be never tarniſhed, by condemning a man without evidence. The lord Bathurſt ſpoke alſo againſt the bill, obſerving, That, if ſuch extraordinary proceedings were countenanced, he ſaw nothing remaining for him and others to do, but to retire to their country houſes, and there, if poſſible, quietly enjoy their eſtates within their own families, ſince the leaſt correſpondence, or intercepted letter, might be made criminal. Then turning to the biſhops, he ſaid, he could hardly account for the inveterate hatred and malice ſome perſons bore the ingenious biſhop of Rocheſter, unleſs it was, that they were

infatuated like the wild Americans, who fondly believed they inherit, not only the ſpoils, but even the abilities of any man they deſtroy. The earl of Stafford ſpoke on the ſame ſide; as alſo lord Trevor, who obſerved, That, if men were in this unprecedented manner proceeded againſt, without legal proof, in a ſhort time the miniſter's favor would be the ſubject's only protection; but that for himſelf, no apprehenſions of what he might ſuffer would deter him from doing his duty. He was anſwered by lord Seafield, who endeavoured to ſhow, that the evidence which had been produced before them was ſufficient to convince any reaſonable man; and in this he was ſupported by the duke of Argyll and lord Lechmere. To theſe lord Cowper replied, That the ſtrongeſt argument urged in behalf of the bill, was neceſſity; but, for his part, he could ſee nothing that could juſtify ſuch unprecedented, and ſuch dangerous proceedings. The other party, however, ſaid little in anſwer; perhaps already ſenſible of a majority in their favor. The bill was paſſed againſt the biſhop, and ſeveral lords entered their proteſt. Among the members in the houſe of commons, who had exerted themſelves moſt ſtrenuouſly in the biſhop's favor, was doctor Freind, the celebrated phyſician; and he was now taken into cuſtody on ſuſpicion of treaſonable practices. He was ſoon after, however, admitted to bail, his friend doctor Mead becoming his ſecurity. In two days after the biſhop of Rocheſter embarked for baniſhment, accompanied with his daughter; and, on the ſame day that he landed

at Calais, the famous lord Bolingbroke arrived there, in his return to England, having obtained his majeſty's pardon: upon which the biſhop, ſmiling, ſaid, *His lordſhip and I are exchanged.* In this manner the biſhop continued in exile and poverty till he died; though it may not be improper to obſerve, that doctor Sacheverel left him, by will, five hundred pounds.

Few tranſactions of importance happened during the remainder of this reign: the miniſtry were employed in making various and expenſive negotiations, and covenants made without faith, and only obſerved from motives of intereſt or fear. The parliament made alſo ſome efforts to check the progreſs of vice and immorality, which now began to be diffuſed through every rank of life: luxury and profligacy had increaſed to a ſurpriſing degree; nor were there any tranſactions to fill the page of hiſtory, except the mercenary ſchemes of vile projectors, or the taſteleſs profuſion of new made opulence. The treaties lately concluded with Spain were again broken, perhaps by every party: admiral Hoſier was ſent to intercept the Spaniſh galleons from America, of which the Spaniards being apprized, remanded back their treaſure; and the greateſt part of the Engliſh fleet, ſent on this errand, was rendered, by the worms, entirely unfit for ſervice, and the men were cut off by the unhealthy climate and long voyage *. To retaliate this, the Spaniards undertook the ſiege of Gibraltar, and with ſimilar ſucceſs. New

* *A. D.* 1726.

treaties were ſet on foot; France offered its mediation; and ſuch a reconciliation as treaties could procure was the conſequence.

The king had not now, for two years, viſited his German dominions; and therefore, ſoon after the breaking up of parliament, he prepared for a journey to Hanover. Accordingly, having appointed an adminiſtration in his abſence, he embarked for Holland; lay, upon his landing, at the little town of Vert; next day proceeded on his journey; and, in two days more, between ten and eleven at night, arrived at Delden, in all appearance in perfect health. He ſupped there very heartily, and continued his progreſs early the next morning. Between eight and nine he ordered the coach to ſtop, and it being perceived that one of his hands lay motionleſs, monſieur Fabrice, who had formerly been the ſervant of the king of Sweden, and now attended king George, chafed it between his. As this had no effect, the ſurgeon was called, who followed on horſeback, and alſo rubbed it with ſpirits: ſoon after the king's tongue began to ſwell, and he had juſt force enough to bid them haſten to Oſnaburgh; and falling into Fabrice's arms, quite inſenſible, never recovered, but expired about eleven the next morning. He died on Sunday the eleventh of June, 1727, in the ſixty-eighth year of his age, and in the thirteenth of his reign. Whatever was good or great in the reign of George I, ought to be attributed wholly to himſelf; whenever he deviated, it might juſtly be imputed to a miniſtry always partial, and often corrupt.

He was almoſt ever attended with good fortune, which was partly owing to prudence, and more to aſſiduity. In ſhort, his ſucceſſes are the ſtrongeſt inſtance of how much may be achieved by moderate abilities exerted with application and uniformity.

LETTER LIV.

I Have not hitherto ſaid any thing of the literature of the preſent period, having reſolved to refer it to a ſeparate letter, in which we may have a more perſpicuous view of it than if blended with the ordinary occurrences of the ſtate. Though learning had never received fewer encouragements than in the preſent reign, yet it never flouriſhed more. That ſpirit of philoſophy which had been excited in former ages, ſtill continued to operate with the greateſt ſucceſs, and produced the greateſt men in every profeſſion. Among the divines, Atterbury and Clarke diſtinguiſhed themſelves. As a preacher, Atterbury united all the graces of ſtyle with all the elegance of a juſt delivery; he was natural, polite, ſpirited; and his ſermons may be ranked among the firſt of this period. Clarke, on the other hand, deſpiſing the graces of eloquence, only ſought after conviction, with rigorous though phlegmatic exactneſs, and brought moral truths almoſt to mathematical preciſion. Yet neither he, Cudworth, nor any other divine, did ſuch ſervice to the reaſoning world, as the great Mr. John Locke, who may be juſtly ſaid to have reformed all our modes

of thinking in metaphyſical inquiry. Though the jargon of ſchools had been before him arranged, yet ſeveral of their errors had ſtill ſubſiſted, and were regarded as true. Locke therefore ſet himſelf to overturn their ſyſtems, and refute their abſurdities: theſe he effectually accompliſhed; for which reaſons his book, which, when publiſhed, was of infinite ſervice, may be found leſs uſeful at preſent, when the doctrines it was calculated to refute are no longer ſubſiſting.

Among the moral writers of this period, the earl of Shafteſbury is not to be paſſed over, whoſe elegance, in ſome meaſure, recompenſes for his want of ſolidity. The opinions of all latter writers upon moral ſubjects are only derived from the ancients. Morals are a ſubject on which the induſtry of man has been exerciſed in every age; and an infinite number of ſyſtems has been the reſult. That of Shafteſbury, in which he eſtabliſhes a natural ſenſe of moral beauty, was originally profeſſed by Plato, and only adorned by the Engliſh philoſopher.

This ſeemed to be the age of ſpeculation. Berkeley, afterward biſhop of Cloyne, in Ireland, ſurpaſſed all his contemporaries in ſubtlety of diſquiſition; but the mere efforts of reaſon, which are exerted rather to raiſe doubt than procure certainty, will never meet with much favor from ſo vain a being as man.

Lord Bolingbroke had alſo ſome reputation for metaphyſical inquiry: his friends extolled his ſagacity on that head, and the public were willing enough to acquieſce in their opinion;

his fame therefore might have continued to riſe, or, at leaſt, would have never ſunk, if he had never publiſhed. His works have appeared, and the public are no longer in their former ſentiments.

In mathematics and natural philoſophy, the vein opened by Newton was proſecuted with ſucceſs: doctor Halley illuſtrated the theory of the tides, and increaſed the catalogue of the ſtars; while Gregory reduced aſtronomy to one comprehenſive and regular ſyſtem.

Doctor Freind, in medicine, produced ſome ingenious theories, which, if they did not improve the art, at leaſt ſhowed his abilities and learning in his profeſſion. Doctor Mead was equally elegant, and more ſucceſsful; to him is owing the uſeful improvement of tapping in the dropſy, by means of a ſwathe.

But, of all the other arts, poetry in this age was carried to the greateſt perfection. The language, for ſome ages, had been improving, but now ſeemed entirely diveſted of its roughneſs and barbarity. Among the poets of this period we may place John Phillips, author of ſeveral poems, but of none more admired than that humorous one, entitled *The Splendid Shilling:* he lived in obſcurity, and died juſt above want. William Congreve deſerves alſo particular notice: his comedies, ſome of which were but coolly received upon their firſt appearance, ſeemed to mend upon repetition; and he is, at preſent, juſtly allowed the foremoſt in that ſpecies of dramatic poeſy: his wit is ever juſt and brilliant: his ſentiments new and lively;

and his elegance equal to his regularity. Next him Vanbrugh is placed, whoſe humor ſeems more natural, and characters more new; but he owes too many obligations to the French entirely to paſs for an original; and his total diſregard of decency, in a great meaſure, impairs his merit. Farquhar is ſtill more lively, and, perhaps, more entertaining than either: his pieces continue the favorite performances of the ſtage, and bear frequent repetition without ſatiety; but he often miſtakes pertneſs for wit, and ſeldom ſtrikes his characters with proper force or originality. However, he died very young; and it is remarkable, that he continued to improve as he grew older; his laſt play, entitled *The Beaux Stratagem*, being the beſt of his productions. Addiſon, both as a poet and proſe writer, deſerves the higheſt regard and imitation. His Campaign, and Letter to lord Halifax from Italy, are maſterpieces in the former, and his eſſays publiſhed in the Spectator are inimitable ſpecimens of the latter. Whatever he treated of was handled with elegance and preciſion; and that virtue which was taught in his writings, was enforced by his example. Steele was Addiſon's friend and admirer: his comedies are perfectly polite, chaſte, and genteel; nor were his other works contemptible: he wrote on ſeveral ſubjects, and yet it is amazing, in the multiplicity of his purſuits, how he found leiſure for the diſcuſſion of any; ever perſecuted by creditors, whom his profuſeneſs drew upon him, or purſuing impracticable ſchemes, ſuggeſted by ill-grounded ambition. Dean Swift was the

profeſſed antagoniſt of both Addiſon and him. He perceived that there was a ſpirit of romance mixed with all the works of the poets who preceded him; or, in other words, that they had drawn nature on the moſt pleaſing ſide. There ſtill therefore was a place left for him, who, careleſs of cenſure, ſhould deſcribe it juſt as it was, with all its deformities: he therefore owes much of his fame, not ſo much to the greatneſs of his genius, as to the boldneſs of it. He was dry, ſarcaſtic and ſevere; and ſuited his ſtyle exactly to the turn of his thought, being conciſe and nervous. In this period alſo flouriſhed many of ſubordinate fame. Prior was the firſt who adopted the French elegant eaſy manner of telling a ſtory; but if what he has borrowed from that nation be taken from him, ſcarce any thing will be left upon which he can lay claim to applauſe in poetry. Rowe was only outdone by Shakſpeare and Otway as a tragic writer: he has fewer abſurdities than either, and is, perhaps, as pathetic as they; but his flights are not ſo bold, nor his characters ſo ſtrongly marked. Perhaps his coming later than the reſt may have contributed to leſſen the eſteem he deſerves. Garth had ſucceſs as a poet; and, for a time, his fame was even greater than his deſert. In his principal work, the Diſpenſary, his verſification is negligent, and his plot is now become tedious; but whatever he may loſe as a poet, it would be improper to rob him of the merit he deſerves for having written the proſe dedication, and preface, to the poem already mentioned, in which he has

ſhown the trueſt wit, with the moſt refined elegance. Parnel, though he has written but one poem, namely, the Hermit, yet has found a place among the Engliſh firſt-rate poets. Gay, likewiſe, by his Fables and Paſtorals, has acquired an equal reputation. But of all who have added to the ſtock of Engliſh poetry, Pope, perhaps, deſerves the firſt place. On him foreigners look as one of the moſt ſucceſsful writers of his time: his verſification is the moſt harmonious, and his correctneſs the moſt remarkable, of all our poets. A noted contemporary of his own, calls the Engliſh the fineſt writers on moral topics, and Pope the nobleſt moral writer of all the Engliſh. Mr. Pope has ſomewhere named himſelf the laſt Engliſh muſe; and, indeed, ſince his time, we have ſeen few productions that can juſtly lay claim to immortality: he carried the language to its higheſt perfection; and thoſe who have attempted ſtill farther to improve it, inſtead of ornament, have only caught finery.

Such was the learning of this period; it flouriſhed without encouragement, and the Engliſh taſte ſeemed to diffuſe itſelf over all Europe. The French tragedies began to be written after the model of ours; our philoſophy was adopted by all who pretended to reaſon for themſelves. At preſent, however, when the learned of Europe are turned to the Engliſh writers for inſtruction, all ſpirit of learning has ceaſed among us. So little has been got by literature for more than an age, that none chuſe to turn to it for preferment. Church preferments,

which were once given as the rewards of learning, have, for ſome time, deviated to the intriguing, venal, and baſe. All deſire of novelty, in thinking, is ſuppreſſed among us; and our ſcholars, more pleaſed with ſecurity and eaſe than honor, coolly follow the reaſonings of their predeceſſors, and walk round the circle of former diſcovery.

LETTER LV.

UPON the death of George I, his ſon George II aſcended the throne*; of inferior abilities to the late king, and conſequently ſtill more ſtrongly attached to his dominions on the continent. The various ſubſidies that had been in the laſt reign granted to maintain foreign connexions, were ſtill kept up in this; and the late ſyſtem of politics underwent no ſort of alteration. The rights and privileges of the throne of England were, in general, committed to the miniſter's care; the royal concern being chiefly fixed upon balancing the German powers, and gaining an aſcendency for the elector of Hanover in the empire. The miniſtry was, at firſt, divided between lord Townſhend, a man of extenſive knowledge; the earl of Cheſterfield, the only man of genius employed under this government; and Sir Robert Walpole, who ſoon after engroſſed the greateſt ſhare of the adminiſtration to himſelf.

Sir Robert Walpole, who is to make the principal figure in the preſent reign, had, from

* A. D. 1727.

low beginnings, raiſed himſelf to the head of the treaſury. Strongly attached to the houſe of Hanover, and ſerving it at times when it wanted his aſſiſtance, he ſtill maintained the prejudices with which he ſet out; and unaware of the alteration of ſentiments in the nation, ſtill attempted to govern by party. He, probably, like every other miniſter, began by endeavouring to ſerve his country; but meeting with ſtrong oppoſition, his ſucceeding endeavours were rather employed in maintaining his poſt than of being ſerviceable in it. The declining prerogative of the crown might have been an early object of his attention: but, in the ſequel, thoſe very meaſures which he took to increaſe it, proved to be the moſt effectual means of undermining it. As lately all his aims were turned only to ſerve himſelf and his friends, he undertook to make a majority in the houſe of commons, by bribing the members: and what was ſtill worſe, avowed the corruption. As all ſpirit of integrity was now laughed out of the kingdom, and as the people were held to duty by no motives of religious obedience to the throne, patriotiſm was ridiculed, and venality practiſed without ſhame. As ſuch a diſpoſition of things naturally produced oppoſition, Sir Robert was poſſeſſed of a moſt phlegmatic inſenſibility to bear reproach, and a calm diſpaſſionate way of reaſoning upon ſuch topics as he deſired to enforce. His diſcourſe was fluent without eloquence; and his reaſons convincing, without any ſhare of elevation.

The houſe of commons, which in the preceding reign had been diſtinguiſhed into whigs

and jacobites, now underwent another change, and was again divided into the court and country party. The court party were for favoring all the ſchemes of the miniſtry, and applauding all the meaſures of the crown. They regarded foreign alliances as conducive to internal ſecurity; and paid the troops of other countries for their promiſes of future aſſiſtance. Of theſe Sir Robert was the leader; and ſuch as he could not convince by his eloquence, he undertook to buy over by places and penſions. The other ſide, who called themſelves the country party, were entirely averſe to continental connexions; they complained that immenſe ſums were laviſhed on ſubſidies which could never be uſeful; and that alliances were bought with money, which ſhould be only rewarded by a reciprocation of good intentions. Theſe looked upon the frequent journies of the king to his electoral dominions with a jealous eye, and ſometimes hinted at the alienation of the royal affections from England. Moſt of theſe had been ſtrong aſſertors of the proteſtant ſucceſſion; and not fearing the reproach of jacobitiſm, they ſpoke with ſtill greater boldneſs. As the court party generally threatened the houſe of commons with imaginary dangers to the ſtate; ſo theſe of the country uſually declaimed againſt the encroachments of the prerogative. The threats of neither were founded in truth; the kingdom was in no danger from abroad; nor was internal liberty in the leaſt infringed by the crown. On the contrary, thoſe who viewed the ſtate with an unprejudiced eye, were of opinion, that the

prerogatives of the crown were the only part of the conſtitution that was growing every day weaker; that, while the king's thoughts were turned to foreign concerns, the miniſtry were unmindful of his authority at home; and that every day the government was making haſty ſteps to an ariſtocracy, the worſt of all governments. As Walpole headed the court party, ſo the leaders of the oppoſite ſide were Mr. William Pitt, Mr. Shippen, Sir William Wyndham, and Mr. Hungerford.

The great objects of controverſy during this reign, were the national debt, and the number of forces to be kept in pay. The government, at the acceſſion of the preſent monarch, owed more than thirty millions of money; and though it was a time of profound peace, yet this ſum was continually found to increaſe. To pay off this, the miniſtry propoſed many projects, and put ſome into execution; but what could be expected from a ſet of men, who made the public wealth only ſubſervient to private intereſt, and who grew powerful on the wrecks of their country? Demands for new ſupplies were made every ſeſſion of parliament, either for the purpoſes of ſecuring friends upon the continent, of guarding the internal polity, or for enabling the miniſtry to act vigorouſly in conjunction with their allies abroad. Theſe were as regularly oppoſed as made: the ſpeakers of the country party ever inſiſted, that the Engliſh had no buſineſs to embroil themſelves with the affairs of the continent; that expenſes were incurred without prudence or neceſſity; and that the increaſe

increaſe of the national debt, by multiplying taxes, would at length become intolerable to the people. Whatever reaſon there might be in ſuch arguments, they were, notwithſtanding, conſtantly overruled; and every demand granted with pleaſure and profuſion.

All theſe treaties and alliances, however, in which the kingdom had been lately involved, ſeemed no way productive of the general tranquillity expected from them. The Spaniards, who had never been thoroughly reconciled, ſtill continued their depredations, and plundered the Engliſh merchants upon the ſouthern coaſts of America, as if they had been pirates. This was the reign of negotiations; and from theſe alone the miniſtry promiſed themſelves and the nation redreſs. Still, however, the enemy went on to inſult and ſeize, regardleſs of our vain expoſtulations. The Britiſh merchants complained *, by petition, of the loſſes ſuſtained by the Spaniards; and the houſe of commons deliberated upon this ſubject. They examined the evidence, and preſented an addreſs to his majeſty. He promiſed them all poſſible ſatisfaction, and negotiations were begun as formerly, and a new treaty was ſigned at Vienna between the emperor and the kings of Great Britain and Spain, tending to confirm the former. Though ſuch tranſactions did not give the ſecurity that was expected from them, yet they, in ſome meaſure, put off the troubles of Europe for a time. An interval of peace

* *A. D.* 1728.

ſucceeded, in which ſcarce any events happened that deſerve the remembrance of a hiſtorian: ſuch intervals are, however, the periods of happineſs to a people: for hiſtory is too often but the regiſter of human calamities. By this treaty at Vienna the king of England conceived hopes that the peace of Europe was eſtabliſhed upon the moſt laſting foundation. Don Carlos, upon the death of the duke of Parma, was, by the aſſiſtance of an Engliſh fleet, put in peaceable poſſeſſion of Parma and Placentia. Six thouſand Spaniards were quietly admitted, and quartered in the duchy of Tuſcany, to ſecure for him the reverſion of that dukedom. Thus we ſee Europe, in ſome meaſure, reſembling a republic, putting monarchs into new kingdoms, and depriving others of their ſucceſſion by an univerſal concurrence. But this amicable diſpoſition among the great powers could never continue long; and the republic of Europe muſt be an empty name, until there be ſome controlling power ſet up by univerſal conſent, to enforce obedience to the law of nations.

During this interval of profound peace, nothing remarkable happened, except the conſtant diſputations in the houſe of commons, where the conteſts between the court and country party were carried on with the greateſt acrimony, the ſpeeches on either ſide being dictated leſs by reaſon than reſentment. A calm, unintereſted reader is now ſurpriſed at the heat with which many ſubjects, of little importance in themſelves, were diſcuſſed at that time; he now ſmiles at thoſe denunciations of ruin with which

their orations are replete. The truth is, the liberty of a nation is better ſupported by the oppoſition, than by what is ſaid in the oppoſition.

In times of profound tranquillity the ſlighteſt occurrences become objects of univerſal attention. A ſociety of men, entitled *The Charitable Corporation*, excited the indignation of the public. Their profeſſed intention was, to lend money at legal intereſt to the poor, upon ſmall pledges; and to perſons of better rank, upon proper ſecurity. Their capital was at firſt limited to thirty thouſand pounds; but they afterward increaſed it to ſix hundred thouſand. This money was granted in by ſubſcription; and the care of conducting the capital was intruſted to a proper number of directors. This company, having continued for more than twenty years, the caſhier, George Robinſon, and the warehouſekeeper of the company, diſappeared in one day. Five hundred thouſand pounds of the capital appeared to be ſunk and embezzled by the directors, in a manner the proprietors could not account for. They therefore petitioned the houſe, repreſenting the manner in which they had been defrauded of ſuch vaſt ſums of money, and the diſtreſs to which many were reduced, in conſequence of ſuch impoſition. The petition was received, and a ſecret committee appointed to inquire into the grievance. They ſoon diſcovered a moſt iniquitous ſcene of fraud, which had been carried on by Thomſon and Robinſon, in concert with ſome of the directors, for embezzling the capital, and cheating the proprietors.

Many perſons of rank and quality were concerned in this infamous conſpiracy; even ſome of the firſt characters in the nation did not eſcape without cenſure. The houſe of commons declared their reſentment, and expelled one or two of their members; but the ſufferers met with ſcarce any redreſs. Nor can I mention ſuch a circumſtance without reflecting on that ſpirit of rapacity and avarice which infected every degree of people. An ill example in the governing part of a country ever diffuſes itſelf downward; and while the miniſtry do not bluſh at detection, the people of every rank will not fear guilt. About this time not leſs than five members of parliament were expelled for the moſt ſordid acts of knavery; Sir Robert Sutton, Sir Archibald Grant, and George Robinſon, for their frauds in the management of the *Charitable Corporation* ſcheme; Dennis Bond, eſquire, and ſerjeant Burch, for a fraudulent ſale of the late earl of Derwentwater's eſtates. Luxury had produced prodigality, the ſure parent of every meanneſs. It was even aſſerted in the houſe of lords, that not one ſhilling of the forfeited eſtates was ever applied to the ſervice of the public, but became the reward of avarice and venality.

Another occurrence of a more private nature about this time excited public compaſſion, not without a degree of horror: Richard Smith, a bookbinder, and his wife, had long lived together, and ſtruggled with thoſe wants, which, notwithſtanding the profuſion of the rich at this time, oppreſſed the poor. Their mutual

tenderneſs for each other was the only comfort they had in their diſtreſſes, which diſtreſſes were increaſed by having a child, which they knew not how to maintain. At length they took the deſperate reſolution of dying by their own hands; the child's throat was cut, and the huſband and wife were found hanging in their bedchamber. They left a letter behind, containing the reaſons which induced them to this act of deſperation: they declared, that they could no longer ſupport a life of ſuch complicated wretchedneſs; and thought it tenderneſs to take their child with them from a world where they themſelves had found no compaſſion. Suicide, in many inſtances, is aſcribed to phrenzy: we have here an inſtance of ſelf-murder, concerted with compoſure, and borrowing the aids of reaſon for its vindication.

LETTER LVI.

THE hiſtory of England has little during this interval to excite curioſity. The debates in parliament grew every day more obſtinate, as every ſubject happened to come round in voting the annual ſupplies; but as the ſubjects were moſtly the ſame, ſo alſo were the arguments. There was one, however, of a different nature from thoſe in the uſual courſe of buſineſs, which was labored for ſtrenuouſly by the miniſtry, and as warmly oppoſed by their antagoniſts, namely, the exciſe bill, which Sir Robert Walpole introduced into the houſe*, by firſt

* *A. D.* 1733.

declaiming againſt the frauds practiſed by the factors in London, who were employed by the American planters in ſelling their tobacco. To prevent theſe frauds he propoſed, inſtead of having the cuſtoms levied in the uſual manner upon tobacco, that what was imported ſhould be lodged in warehouſes appointed for that purpoſe by the officers of the crown; from thence to be ſold, after paying the duty of four-pence *per* pound, when the proprietor found a market for it; this propoſal raiſed a violent ferment not leſs in the houſe than without doors. Thoſe who oppoſed the ſcheme, aſſerted, that it would expoſe the factors to ſuch hardſhips, that they would not be able to continue the trade, nor would it prevent the frauds complained of. They aſſerted, that it would produce an additional ſwarm of exciſe officers and warehouſe keepers, which would at once render the miniſtry formidable, and the people dependent. Arguments, however, were not what the miniſtry moſt dreaded; for the people had been raiſed into ſuch a ferment, that all the avenues of the houſe were crowded with complaining multitudes; and Sir Robert began even to fear for his life. The miniſtry carried the propoſal in the houſe; but obſerving the tumult of the people, they thought fit to drop the deſign. The miſcarriage of the bill was celebrated with public rejoicings in London and Weſtminſter; and the miniſter was burned in effigy by the populace.

This ſucceſs, in the members of the oppoſition, encouraged them to go on to a propoſal

for repealing an act made in the laſt reign, by which the houſe of commons was to be ſeptennial. They propoſed that parliaments ſhould again be made triennial, as had been ſettled at the revolution. In the courſe of this debate, in which they were oppoſed, as uſual, by the miniſtry, they reflected, with great ſeverity, on the meaſures of the late reign. They aſſerted, that the ſeptennial act was an encroachment on the rights of the people; that, during the continuance of that parliament, ſeveral ſevere laws had been enacted; that by one of theſe a man might be removed, and tried at any place where the jury might be favorable to the crown, and where the priſoner's witneſſes could not, or dared not to come; that, by another, a juſtice of the peace was empowered to put the beſt ſubjects to immediate death, after reading a proclamation againſt riots. The South-ſea ſcheme, they ſaid, was eſtabliſhed by an act of a ſeptennial parliament; and the exciſe bill had like; under their influence alſo, to have paſſed into a law. Sir William Wyndham, diſtinguiſhed himſelf in this debate: *Let us ſuppoſe*, ſaid he, *a man without any ſenſe of honor raiſed to be a chief miniſter of ſtate. Suppoſe him poſſeſſed of great wealth; the plunder of the nation. Suppoſe him ſcreened by a corrupt majority of his creatures, and inſulting over all men of family, ſenſe, and honor, in the nation. Let us ſuppoſe a venal parliament, and an ignorant king; I hope ſuch a caſe will never occur; but ſhould ſuch ever happen to be at once united, a ſhort parliament will be*

the only means of leſſening the evil. Notwithſtanding theſe expoſtulations, the miniſtry were, as uſual, victorious, and the motion ſuppreſſed by the majority. Thus the country party now found themſelves outnumbered upon every occaſion; they had long complained, in vain, that debate was uſeleſs, ſince every member ſeemed to have liſted himſelf under the banners of party, to which he held without ſhrinking. Deſpairing therefore of being able to ſtem the torrent of corruption, they retired to their ſeats in the country, and left the miniſtry an undiſputed majority in the houſe.

The miniſter, being now left without oppoſition in the houſe, took an opportunity to render his rivals odious or contemptible, by getting ſeveral uſeful laws paſſed in their abſence; while the king labored with equal aſſiduity to adjuſt the political ſcale of Europe, and for this purpoſe made ſeveral journies to his electoral dominions. But his aſſiduity in healing foreign differences did not prevent one of a more domeſtic nature: for a miſunderſtanding aroſe between him and the prince of Wales; a prince that was the darling of the people, and who profeſſed his diſlike both to the miniſtry and their venal meaſures. He had been a ſhort time before, married to the princeſs of Saxe-Gotha; and the prince's miſtaking a meſſage from the king, at a time when the princeſs was lying-in, firſt cauſed the rupture. It was ſoon after widened by the vile emiſſaries of the court;

ſo that his majeſty forbade the prince his preſence, and gave orders that none of his attendants ſhould be admitted to court. A motion, however, was made in the houſe of commons, for increaſing the prince's ſettlement, which was but fifty thouſand pounds, to a hundred thouſand. It was repreſented that ſo much had been granted by the late king to his preſent majeſty, when prince of Wales; and that ſuch a ſettlement was conformable to the practice of former times, and neceſſary to the independency of the heir apparent to the Engliſh crown. This motion was vigorouſly oppoſed by Sir Robert Walpole, as an encroachment on the prerogative, and an officious intermeddling in the king's family affairs. The ſupporters of the motion obſerved, that the allowance of fifty thouſand pounds was not ſufficient to defray the prince's yearly expenſes, which, by his majeſty's own regulation, amounted to ſixty-three thouſand. The motion, however, met the fate of all other antiminiſterial meaſures, being rejected by the majority.

But whatever imaginary diſappointments the people might ſuffer, there was a blow levelled at the little wit that was left remaining, which has effectually baniſhed all taſte from the ſtage, and from which it has never ſince recovered. When Walpole entered into power, he reſolved to deſpiſe that ſet of under-rate writers, who live by arraigning every miniſtry, and diſſeminating ſcandal and abuſe. For a time he proſecuted that intention; but, at laſt, found it neceſſary to employ a ſet of mean hirelings,

to anſwer calumny with calumny. He wanted judgment to diſtinguiſh genius; or none poſſeſſed of ſuch a gift were mean enough to applaud his meaſures. From hence he took an implacable averſion to the preſs, which ſo ſeverely expoſed his corruption, and branded his follies. But the preſs alone was not the only ſcourge he had to fear; the theatre joined all its ridicule, and he ſaw himſelf expoſed as the object of ſcorn, as well as hatred. When licence once tranſgreſſes the rules of decency, it knows no bounds. Some of the pieces exhibited at that time, were not only ſevere, but immoral alſo. This was what the miniſter held to; he brought in a bill to limit the number of playhouſes; to ſubject all dramatic writings to the inſpection of the lord-chamberlain, whoſe licence was to be obtained before any work could appear. Among thoſe who undertook to oppoſe this bill, was the earl of Cheſterfield, who obſerved, that the laws already in being for keeping the ſtage within due bounds were every way ſufficient. *If*, ſays he, *our ſtage-players at any time exceed thoſe bounds, they ought to be proſecuted, and may be puniſhed. A new law therefore is, in the preſent inſtance, unneceſſary; and every unneceſſary law is dangerous. Wit, my lords, is the property of thoſe that have it; and it is too often the only property they have. It is unjuſt therefore to rob a man at any rate of his poſſeſſions; but it is cruelty to ſpoil him, if already poor. If poets and players are to be reſtrained, let them be reſtrained like other ſubjects; let them be tried by their peers, and*

let not a lord-chamberlain be made the ſovereign judge of wit. A power lodged in the hands of a ſingle man to determine, without limitation or appeal, is a privilege unknown to our laws, and inconſiſtent with our conſtitution. The houſe applauded his wit and eloquence; and the queſtion was carried againſt him.

The diſcontents occaſioned by ſuch proceedings at home, were ſtill more increaſed by the depredations of the Spaniards. They diſputed the right of the Engliſh to cut logwood in the bay of Campeachy, in America; a right which had been often acknowledged, but never clearly explained, in all former treaties between the two kingdoms. Their *Guarda Coſtas* plundered the Engliſh merchants with impunity; and upon the leaſt reſiſtance behaved with inſolence, cruelty, and rapine. The ſubjects of Britain were buried in the mines of Potoſi, deprived of all means of conveying their complaints to their protectors, and their veſſels confiſcated, in defiance of juſtice. The Engliſh court made frequent remonſtrances to that of Madrid, of this outrageous violation of treaties, and they received for anſwer only promiſes of inquiry, which produced no reformation. Our merchants loudly complained of theſe outrages; but the miniſter expected, from negotiation, that redreſs which could only be obtained by arms. He knew that a war would increaſe the difficulties he had to encounter; and he was ſenſible, that thoſe he already encountered required all his art and induſtry to remove. A war, he was ſenſible, would require expenſes which

he wiſhed to ſhare in peace. In ſhort, all his meaſures now were not to ſerve the ſtate, but to preſerve his power. Influenced by theſe conſiderations, he induſtriouſly endeavoured to avoid a rupture. The fears he diſcovered only ſerved to increaſe the enemies' inſolence and pride. However, the complaints of the Engliſh merchants were loud enough to reach the houſe of commons; their letters and memorials were produced, and their grievances enforced at the bar by council. The houſe, at length, agreed to an addreſs, to entreat his majeſty to obtain effectual relief, and to convince Spain, that its indignities would be no longer borne with impunity. Theſe complaints produced a convention between the two crowns, concluded at Prado, importing, that two plenipotentiaries ſhould meet at Madrid, to regulate the reſpective pretenſions of either kingdom, with regard to the trade in America, and the limits of Florida and Carolina. Theſe conferences were to be finiſhed in eight months, and in the mean time all hoſtile preparations were to ceaſe on either ſide. His Catholic majeſty agreed to pay the king of Great Britain ninety-five thouſand pounds, to ſatisfy the demands of the Britiſh ſubjects upon the crown of Spain, after deducting from the whole the demands of the crown and ſubjects of Spain upon that of Britain. Such an agreement as this was juſtly regarded on the ſide of the Britiſh miniſtry as a baſe deſertion of the honor and intereſts of their country; and when the houſe of commons came to take the convention under

conſideration, it produced the warmeſt debate. All the adherents to the prince of Wales joined in the oppoſition. It was alledged, that the Spaniards, inſtead of granting a redreſs, had rather extorted a releaſe for their former conduct; that they ſtill aſſerted their right of ſearching Engliſh ſhips, and had not ſo much as mentioned the word *ſatisfaction* in all the treaty, Notwithſtanding all the remonſtrances againſt this treaty, the majority of the houſe declared in its favor; and ſeveral members of the oppoſite ſentiment retired from parliament, having deſpaired of being longer ſerviceable in a place where party, and not reaſon, was ſeen to prevail.

As Spain had engaged to pay a large ſum of money by this convention, ſome time after, when the miniſter demanded a ſupply, upon a different occaſion, lord Bathurſt moved to know, whether Spain had paid the ſums ſtipulated, as the time limited for the payment was expired. The duke of Newcaſtle, by his majeſty's permiſſion, acquainted the houſe, that it was not paid; and that Spain had aſſigned no reaſon for the delay. In ſome meaſure, therefore, to atone for his former ſlowneſs, the miniſter now began to put the nation into a condition for war. Letters of repriſals were granted againſt the Spaniards. Theſe preparations were regarded by the Spaniſh court as actual hoſtilities. The French ambaſſador at the Hague declared, that the king his maſter was obliged, by treaties, to aſſiſt the king of Spain; he diſſuaded the Dutch from eſpouſing the cauſe of England, who promiſed him an inviolable neutrality. It is

curious enough to conſider the revolutions which the political ſyſtem of Europe had undergone. Not above twenty years before, France and England were combined againſt Spain; at preſent, France and Spain united againſt England. Thoſe ſtateſmen who build upon alliances as a laſting baſis of power, will, at length, find themſelves fatally miſtaken.

A rupture between Great Britain and Spain being now become inevitable, the people, who had long clamored for war, began to feel uncommon alacrity at its approach; and the miniſtry, finding it unavoidable, began to be earneſt in preparation. Orders were iſſued for augmenting the land forces, and raiſing a body of marines. Two rich Spaniſh prizes were taken in the Mediterranean, and war declared againſt them in form *. Admiral Vernon was ſent to the Weſt-Indies, commander of the fleet, in order to diſtreſs the Spaniards in that part of the globe. Vernon was a rough and honeſt ſailor, untainted with the corruption of the effeminacy of the times. He had in the houſe of commons aſſerted, that Porto Bello, a fort and harbour in South America, might be eaſily taken, and that he himſelf would undertake to reduce it with ſix ſhips only. A project which appeared ſo wild and impoſſible, was ridiculed by the miniſtry; but, as he ſtill inſiſted upon the propoſal, they were pleaſed to comply with his requeſt. This they ſuppoſed would at once rid them of a troubleſome antagoniſt in the

* *A. D.* 1739.

houſe; and, in caſe of his failure, it would be a new cauſe of triumph at his diſgrace. In this, however, they were diſappointed. The admiral, with ſix ſhips only, attacked and demoliſhed all the fortifications of the place, and came away victorious, almoſt without bloodſhed. This dawning of ſucceſs upon the Britiſh arms induced the houſe of commons to enter vigorouſly into the king's meaſures for carrying on the war. They enabled him to equip a very powerful navy; they voted a ſubſidy to the king of Denmark, and empowered their ſovereign to defray ſome other expenſes, not ſpecified in the eſtimates: the whole of their grants amounting to about four millions. The war was now carried on with vigor, and the debates in the houſe of commons became leſs violent. In a nation, like England, of arts, arms, and commerce, war, at certain intervals, muſt ever be ſerviceable: it turns the current of wealth from the induſtrious to the enterpriſing. Thus, all orders of mankind find encouragement, and the nation becomes compoſed of individuals, who have ſkill to acquire property, and who have courage to defend it.

LETTER LVII.

A War between England and Spain was ſufficient to communicate diſturbances over all the globe. Countries that were once too obſcure to be known, were now ſeen to ſend out fleets, one ſhip of which was capable of deſtroying all the naval power of an Aſiatic empire.

A ſquadron of ſhips commanded by commodore Anſon was equipped, in order to ſail through the Straits of Magellan into the South Sea, and to act againſt the enemy on the coaſts of Chili and Peru. This fleet was to cooperate occaſionally with admiral Vernon acroſs the iſthmus of Darien; but the delays and blunders of the miniſtry fruſtrated this ſcheme, though originally well laid. However, though too late in the ſeaſon, the commodore ſet forward with five ſhips of the line, a frigate, and two ſtore-ſhips, ſupplied with proviſions and other merchandiſe, deſigned to carry on a trade with the ſavage inhabitants of that part of the world, or to conciliate their affections. The number of men amounted, in all, to about fourteen hundred, including two hundred invalids taken from the hoſpitals, and two hundred new-raiſed recruits. This whole expedition is a fine inſtance of the power of perſeverance in forcing fortune. The commodore ſteered his courſe by the iſland of Madeira, proceeded to the Cape Verd Iſlands, and ſailed along the coaſts of Braſil. He refreſhed for ſome time at the iſland of St. Catharine, in twenty-ſeven degrees of ſouthern latitude; a ſpot that enjoys all the verdure and fruitfulneſs of thoſe luxurious climates. From this place he ſteered ſtill onward into the cold and tempeſtuous climates of the ſouth, along the coaſt of Patagonia; and, in about five months, entered the famous Straits of Magellan. After having ſuffered the moſt violent tempeſts, he doubled Cape Horn; the reſt of his fleet were diſperſed or wrecked; his

crew

crew deplorably diſabled by the ſcurvy; and his own ſhip with difficulty arrived at the iſland of Juan Fernandez. In this delicious abode he remained for ſome time, where nature ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, to conſole mankind for the calamities of their own avarice and ambition. In order to improve ſtill farther a retreat of ſuch elegance, he ordered ſeveral European ſeeds and fruits to be ſown upon the iſland, which increaſed to ſuch a ſurpriſing degree, that ſome Spaniards, who, ſeveral years after, landed there, and found them in plenty, could not avoid acknowledging this act of generoſity and benevolence. Here the commodore was joined by one ſhip more of his fleet, and by the Trial frigate of ſeven guns. Advancing now northward, toward the tropic of Capricorn, he attacked the city of Payta by night. In this bold attempt he made no uſe of his ſhips, nor even diſembarked all his men. A few ſoldiers landed by night, and filled the whole town with terror and confuſion. The governor of the garriſon, and the inhabitants, fled on all ſides; accuſtomed to cruelty over a conquered enemy themſelves, they expected a ſimilitude of treatment. In the mean time, for three days, a ſmall number of Engliſh kept poſſeſſion of the town, and ſtripped it of all its treaſures and merchandiſe, to an immenſe amount. Such of the negroes as had not fled, were made uſe of in carrying the goods of their former maſters on board the Engliſh ſhipping; and the Spaniards, refuſing to treat, ſoon ſaw their town all in flames. This, however, was

but a ſmall puniſhment for all the cruelties which they had practiſed, in taking poſſeſſion of that country, upon its firſt inhabitants. The plunder of this place ſerved to enrich the captors; and the ravage made among them, by the ſcurvy, ſtill increaſed the ſhare of every ſurvivor. Soon after, this ſmall ſquadron came up as far as Panama, ſituated on the Straits of Darien, upon the weſtern ſide of the great American continent; ſo that, by Anſon on the one, and Vernon on the other, the Spaniſh empire was attacked on both ſides: but the ſcheme failed from Vernon's want of ſucceſs.

Anſon, who now only commanded two ſhips, the remainder having either put back to England, or been wrecked by the tempeſts, placed all his hopes in taking one of thoſe rich Spaniſh ſhips which trade between the Philippine iſlands, near the coaſt of China and Mexico, on the Spaniſh main. Only one or two, at the moſt, of theſe veſſels, paſſed from one continent to the other in a year. Theſe are made immenſely ſtrong, large, and carry great quantities of treaſure and merchandiſe. The commodore, therefore, and his little fleet, traverſed that great ocean lying between the Aſiatic and American continent, in hopes of meeting this rich prize, which it was hoped would, at that time of the year, return from the eaſt, and amply repay the adventurers for all their dangers and fatigues. Avarice thus became honorable when purſued through peril and diſtreſs. But the ſcurvy once more viſited his crew, now long kept at ſea, and without freſh proviſions. This

diſorder, though it takes the ſame name, is very different from that on land. The ſea ſcurvy is attended with an univerſal putrefaction, the teeth looſen, old wounds that are healed again open, and ſometimes the limbs are ſeen to drop off at the joints. By this terrible diſorder ſeveral of his men daily fell, and others were diſabled. One of his ſhips becoming leaky, and the number of his hands decreaſing, he thought proper to ſet it on fire in the midſt of the ocean. His fleet now being reduced only to one ſhip, called *The Centurion*, of ſixty guns, and all the crew in the moſt deplorable ſituation, he caſt anchor on the deſerted iſland of Tinian, which lies about half way between the old and new world. This iſland had, ſome years before, been peopled by near thirty thouſand inhabitants; but an epidemical diſtemper coming among them, deſtroyed a part, and the reſt forſook the place. Nothing however could exceed the beauty of this ſpot. The moſt romantic imagination cannot form a ſcene ſurpaſſing what Tinian naturally afforded; greens, groves, caſcades, fields, flowers, and proſpects. This retreat ſaved the Engliſh ſquadron. All that a ſea-beaten company of mariners could wiſh, was found here in great abundance; clear and wholeſome water, medicinal herbs, domeſtic animals, and other neceſſaries for refitting their ſhattered veſſel. Thus refreſhed, he went forward toward China, paſſed by the kingdom of Formoſa, and went up the river Canton, in order to careen the only ſhip which was now left him. Being thus far on his way homeward,

nothing can better teſtify the hardy and untameable ſpirit of the Engliſh, than his venturing once more back into the ſame ocean, where he had experienced ſuch a variety of diſtreſs. The commodore having put his veſſel into good order, by the aſſiſtance of the Chineſe, and having taken Dutch and Indian ſailors on board, he again returned toward America. At length, on the 9th of June, he diſcovered the galleon he ſo ardently expected. This veſſel was formed as well for the purpoſes of war as of merchandiſe. It mounted forty guns, and ſix hundred men, while the crew of the commodore did not exceed half that number. The engagement ſoon began; but as thoſe who attack have always the advantage of thoſe who defend, and the Engliſh are more expert in naval affairs than any other nation, the Spaniſh ſhip ſoon became the Centurion's prize. There were but a few men killed on the ſide of the Engliſh, while the Spaniards loſt near ſeventy. The conqueror now returned to Canton, once more, with his prize. He there maintained the honor of his country, in refuſing to pay the impoſts which were laid upon ordinary merchants; and inſiſted, that an Engliſh ſhip of war was exempted from ſuch a duty. From Canton he proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope, and proſecuted his voyage to England, where he arrived in ſafety, with immenſe riches*. His laſt prize was valued at three hundred and thirteen thouſand pounds ſterling; and the different captures that had been made

* *A. D.* 1744.

before this laſt piece of good fortune, might amount to as much more. Upon his return, commodore Anſon received all that honor which prudence and perſeverance deſerve. He ſoon became the oracle conſulted in all naval deliberations; the king afterward raiſed him to the dignity of the peerage; and he was made firſt lord of the admiralty.

LETTER LVIII.

THIS expedition of Anſon took up almoſt three years. The Engliſh, in the mean time, carried on the operations againſt Spain with vigor, and various ſucceſs. When Anſon had ſet out, it was only to act a ſubordinate part to a formidable armament, deſigned for the coaſts of New Spain, conſiſting of twenty-nine ſhips of the line, and almoſt an equal number of frigates, furniſhed with all kinds of warlike ſtores, near fifteen thouſand ſeamen, and twelve thouſand land forces. Never was a fleet more completely equipped, nor never had the nation more ſanguine hopes of victory. Lord Cathcart commanded the land forces; but, dying on the paſſage, the command devolved upon general Wentworth, whoſe chief merit was his favor with thoſe in power. This, with ſeveral other unfortunate circumſtances, concurred to fruſtrate the hopes of the public. The miniſtry, without any viſible reaſon, had detained the fleet in England until the ſeaſon for action was almoſt over. In the country where they were to carry on their operations, periodical rains begin about

the end of April; and this change in the atmoſphere is always attended with epidemical diſtempers. They at length, however, ſet ſail for the continent of New Spain; and after ſome tempeſts, and ſome delays, arrived before Carthagena. This city, which lies within ſixty miles of Panama, ſerves as the magazine for the Spaniſh merchandiſe, which is brought from Europe hither, and from thence tranſported, by land, to Panama, lying on the oppoſite coaſt. The taking of Carthagena, therefore, would have interrupted the whole trade between Old Spain and the New. The troops were landed on the iſland Terra Bomba, near the mouth of the harbour, known by the name of the Bocca-Chica, which was fortified by all the arts of engineering. The Britiſh forces erected a battery on ſhore, with which they made a breach in the principal fort; while the admiral ſent a number of ſhips to divide the fire of the enemy, and to co-operate with the endeavours of the army. The breach being deemed practicable, the forces advanced to the attack; but the Spaniards deſerted the forts, which, had they had courage, they might have defended with ſucceſs. The troops, upon this ſucceſs, were brought nearer the city, where they found a greater oppoſition than they had expected. The climate killed numbers of the men; and a diſſenſion, which aroſe between the land and naval officers, retarded all the operations. Stimulated by mutual recriminations, the general ordered his troops to attack the fort of St. Lazar; but the guides being ſlain,

the troops miſtook their way, and attacked the ſtrongeſt part of the fortification, where, after ſuffering incredible ſlaughter with the moſt ſerene intrepidity, they were at length obliged to retire. Bad proviſions, a horrid climate, and an epidemical fever, ſtill more contributed to thin their numbers, and to deprive them of all hopes of ſucceſs. It was determined therefore to reimbark the troops, and to conduct them, as ſoon as poſſible, from this ſcene of ſlaughter and contagion. The fortification and harbour were demoliſhed; and the fleet returned to Jamaica. This fatal miſcarriage, which tarniſhed the Britiſh arms, was no ſooner known in England, than the kingdom was filled with murmurs and diſcontent: a meaſure, which if it had ſucceeded, would have crowned the promoters of it with honor, now only ſerved to cover them with reproach. The greateſt part of this diſcontent fell upon the miniſter: his former conduct, which juſtly deſerved cenſure, was not ſo powerfully objected againſt him as this failure, of which he was innocent. It is not villany, but misfortune, that finds cenſure from mankind. Beſides, the activity of the enemy in diſtreſſing the trade of England, contributed to increaſe the murmurs of the people. Their privateers were ſo numerous and ſucceſsful, that in the beginning of this year they had taken, ſince the commencement of the war, four hundred and ſeven ſhips belonging to the ſubjects of Great Britain. The Engliſh, though at immenſe expenſe in equipping fleets, ſeemed tamely to lie down under

every blow, and ſuffered one loſs after another without repriſal. This general diſcontent had a manifeſt influence upon the election of members for the new parliament. All the adherents of the prince of Wales, who now lived retired from the court as a private gentleman, concurred in the oppoſition to the miniſtry. Obſtinate ſtruggles were maintained in all parts of the kingdom; and ſuch a national ſpirit of oppoſition prevailed, that the country intereſt ſeemed, at length, to preponderate in the houſe of commons. It was ſoon ſeen that the intereſt of the miniſter was in the wane; and that opinion, once eſtabliſhed, began to deprive him of even thoſe who had determined to act with neutrality. *In proclinantes*, as Ovid ſays, *omne recumbit onus.*

Sir Robert now tottered on the brink of ruin. He was ſenſible that nothing but a diviſion in the oppoſition could give him ſafety. The prince was his moſt formidable rival; a prince revered by the whole nation, for his humanity, benevolence, and candor. Theſe were only private virtues; but theſe were all he had then a liberty of exerciſing. The miniſter's firſt attempt was, to endeavour taking him from the party; a meſſage therefore was carried to his royal highneſs by the biſhop of Oxford, importing, that, if the prince would write a letter to the king, he and all his counſellors ſhould be taken into favor, fifty thouſand pounds ſhould be added to his revenue, two hundred thouſand given him to pay his debts, and ſuitable proviſion ſhould be made, in due time, for all his followers,

This, to a prince already involved in debt, from the neceſſity of keeping up his dignity, was a tempting offer; but his royal highneſs generouſly diſdained it, declaring he would accept no ſuch conditions dictated to him under the inſtrument of Sir Robert Walpole. The miniſter now therefore ſaw that no arts could diſſolve the combination againſt him: he reſolved, as an expiring ſtruggle, to try his ſtrength once more in the houſe of commons upon a diſputed election; but he had the mortification to ſee the majority ſtill increaſed againſt him by ſixteen voices. He then declared he would never ſit in that houſe more. The parliament was adjourned the next day, and Sir Robert, being created earl of Orford, reſigned all his employments. Never was a joy more univerſal and ſincere than this reſignation produced. The people now flattered themſelves that all their domeſtic grievances would find redreſs; that their commerce would be protected abroad; that the war would be carried on with vigor; and that the houſe of commons would be unanimous in every meaſure. But they were diſappointed in moſt of their expectations. The miſconduct of a miniſter is more likely to affect his ſucceſſor than himſelf, as a weak reign ever produces a feeble ſucceſſion. The houſe of commons had been for a long time increaſing in power, and Walpole, with all his arts, was, in fact, rather weakening than extending the prerogative. By his method of bribing oppoſition he had taught the venal to oppoſe him; and, by his increaſing the national debt, he

weakened the vigor of the crown in war, and made it more dependent upon parliament in times of peace. A part of thoſe who ſucceeded him were therefore ſenſible of this, and ſtill reſolved to ſupport the crown, which they regarded as the only declining branch of the conſtitution. Another part, who clamored from motives of ſelf-intereſt, having now attained the object of their deſires, blundered on in the former meaſures, ſtudious of fortune, and not of fame. In ſhort, his ſucceſſor, purſuing all the former ſchemes of the depoſed miniſter, preſented the political part of the nation with the mortifying proſpect of pretended patriotiſm unſtripped of its maſk, and ſhowed the little certainty there is in all political reaſonings.

LETTER LIX.

THE war with Spain had now continued for ſeveral years, but with indifferent ſucceſs. Some unſucceſsful expeditions were carried on in the Weſt Indies under admiral Vernon, commodore Knowles, and others; and theſe were all aggravated by a ſet of worthleſs and mercenary *things*, called *political writers* — a claſs of beings firſt employed againſt Walpole, and afterward encouraged by him, at the expenſe, as it is ſaid, of no leſs than thirty thouſand a year. Theſe were men naturally too dull to ſhine in any of the politer kinds of literature, which adorn either the ſcholar or the gentleman, and therefore they turned their

thoughts to politics; a ſcience on which they might declaim without knowledge, and be dull without detection. Theſe men, I ſay, had for ſome time embarraſſed the conſtitution, inflamed the people, and were paid with large penſions from the crown. It was upon this occaſion that they exaggerated every miſconduct *, and drew frightful pictures of the diſtreſs and miſery which they foreboded to poſterity. This clamor, and want of ſucceſs in a naval war, in which the principal ſtrength of the kingdom lay, induced the new miniſtry to divert the attention of the public to a war which might be carried on by land. The king's attachment to his electoral dominions contributed ſtill more to turn the current of Britiſh indignation that way, and an army was therefore now prepared to be ſent into Flanders; the war with Spain being become an object but of ſecondary conſideration.

To have a clear, yet conciſe idea of the origin of the troubles on the continent, it will be expedient to go back for ſome years, and trace the meaſures of the European republic to that period where we formerly left them. After the duke of Orleans, who had been regent of France, died, cardinal Fleury undertook to ſettle that confuſion in which the former had left the kingdom. His moderation was equal to his prudence; he was ſincere, frugal, modeſt, and ſimple. Under him France repaired her loſſes, and enriched herſelf by commerce: he

* *A. D.* 1743.

only left the ſtate to its own natural methods of thriving, and ſaw it daily aſſuming its former health and vigor. During the long interval of peace which his councils had procured for Europe, two powers, unregarded, now began to attract the notice and the jealouſy of their neighbouring ſtates. Peter the Great had already civilized Ruſſia, and this new extenſive empire began to influence the councils of other princes, and to give laws to the North. The other power was that of Pruſſia, whoſe dominions were compact and populous, and whoſe forces were well maintained and ready for action. The empire continued under Charles VI, who had been placed upon the throne by the treaty of Utrecht. Sweden languiſhed, being not yet recovered from the deſtructive projects of Charles XII. Denmark was powerful; and part of Italy ſubject to the maſters which had been impoſed upon it by foreign treaties. All, however, continued to enjoy a profound peace, until the death of Auguſtus, king of Poland, was found again to kindle up the general flame. The emperor Charles VI, aſſiſted by the arms of Ruſſia, declared for the elector of Saxony, ſon to the deceaſed king. On the other hand, France declared for Staniſlaus, who had been long ſince elected king of Poland by Charles XII, and whoſe daughter had been ſince married to the French king. Staniſlaus repaired to Dantzic, in order to ſupport his election. Ten thouſand Ruſſians appearing, the Poliſh nobility diſperſed, and their new elected monarch was ſhut up, and beſieged by ſo ſmall a number of forces.

The city was taken, the king eſcaped with the utmoſt difficulty, and fifteen hundred Frenchmen, that were ſent to his aſſiſtance, were made priſoners of war. He had now no hopes left but in the aſſiſtance of France, which accordingly reſolved to give him powerful ſuccours, by diſtreſſing the houſe of Auſtria. The views of France were ſeconded by Spain and Sardinia: both hoped to grow more powerful by a diviſion of the ſpoils of Auſtria; and France had motives of alliance and revenge. A French army therefore ſoon over-ran the empire under the conduct of old marſhal Villars; the duke of Montemar, the Spaniſh general, was equally victorious in the kingdom of Naples; and the emperor, Charles VI, had the mortification of ſeeing himſelf deprived of the greateſt part of Italy, for having attempted to give a king to Poland. Theſe rapid ſucceſſes of France and its allies ſoon compelled the emperor to demand a peace. By this treaty, Staniſlaus, upon whoſe account the war was undertaken, was obliged to renounce all right to the throne of Poland; and France made ſome valuable acqueſts of dominion, particularly the dutchy of Lorrain. In the year 1740, the death of the emperor gave the French another opportunity of exerting their ambition. Regardleſs of treaties, particularly the pragmatic ſanction, as it was called, which ſettled upon the daughter of the emperor the reverſion of all his dominions, they cauſed the elector of Bavaria to be crowned emperor. Thus the daughter of Charles VI, deſcended from an illuſtrious line of emperors, ſaw herſelf

ſtripped of her inheritance, and for a whole year without hopes of ſuccour. She had ſcarce cloſed her father's eyes, when ſhe loſt Sileſia, by an irruption of the young king of Pruſſia, who ſeized the opportunity of her defenceleſs ſtate to renew his ancient pretenſions to that province, of which it muſt be owned his anceſtors had been unjuſtly deprived. France, Saxony, and Bavaria, attacked the reſt of her dominions.

In this forlorn ſituation ſhe found a powerful ally in Britain; Sardinia and Holland ſoon after came to her aſſiſtance, and, laſt of all, Ruſſia joined in her cauſe. It may be demanded, What part Britain had in theſe continental meaſures? The intereſts of Hanover; the ſecurity and aggrandizement of that electorate, depended upon the proper regulation of the empire. Lord Carteret had now taken that place in the royal confidence which had formerly been poſſeſſed by Walpole; and, by purſuing theſe meaſures, he ſoothed the wiſhes of his maſter, and opened a more extenſive field for his own ambition. He expected honor from victories, which could produce no good; and campaigns, whether ſucceſsful or not, that could only terminate in misfortune. When the parliament met, his majeſty informed them of his ſtrict adherence to his engagements, though attacked in his own dominions; and that he had augmented the Britiſh forces in the Low Countries with ſixteen thouſand Hanoverians. When the ſupplies came to be conſidered, by which this additional number of troops was to be paid, it raiſed violent

debates in both houſes. It was conſidered as hiring the troops of the electorate to fight their own cauſe. The miniſtry, however, who were formerly remarkable for declaiming againſt continental meaſures, now boldly ſtood up for them; and, at length, by dint of number, carried their cauſe. The people ſaw, with pain, their former defenders ſacrificing the blood and treaſure of the nation upon deſtructive alliances; they knew not now on whom to rely for ſafety, and began to think that patriotiſm was but an empty name. However injurious theſe meaſures might have been to the nation, they were of infinite ſervice to the queen of Hungary. She began, at this period, to triumph over all her enemies. The French were driven out of Bohemia. Her general, prince Charles, at the head of a large army, invaded the dominions of Bavaria. Her rival, the nominal emperor, was obliged to fly before her: abandoned by his allies, and ſtripped of all his dominions, he repaired to Francfort, where he lived in indigence and obſcurity. He agreed to continue neuter during the remainder of the war; while the French, who firſt began it as allies, ſupported the burden. The troops ſent by England to the queen's aſſiſtance were commanded by the earl of Stair, an experienced general, who had learned the art of war under the famous prince Eugene; and the chief object he had firſt in view was, to effect a junction with the army commanded by prince Charles of Lorrain. The French, in order to prevent this junction, aſſembled ſixty thouſand men upon the river

Maine; under the command of marſhal Noailles, who poſted his troops upon the eaſt ſide of that river *. The Britiſh forces, to the number of forty thouſand, puſhed forward on the other ſide, while the French, in the mean time, found means to cut off all the communications by which they could be ſupplied with proviſions. The king of England arrived at the camp while the army was in this ſituation; and, ſeeing it in danger of ſtarving, reſolved to proceed forward, to join twelve thouſand Hanoverians and Heſſians, who had reached Hanau. With this view he decamped; but before the army had marched three leagues, he found the enemy had incloſed him on every ſide, near a village called Dettingen. In this ſituation he muſt have fought at great diſadvantage, if he began the attack; and if he continued in the ſame ſituation, his army muſt have periſhed for want of ſubſiſtence. The impetuoſity of the French, however, ſaved his army; they paſſed a defile which they ſhould have guarded, and under the conduct of the duke of Gramont, their horſe charged with great impetuoſity. They were received by the Engliſh infantry with undaunted reſolution; the French were obliged to give way, and to paſs the Maine with great precipitation, with the loſs of about five thouſand men. The king, who was poſſeſſed of perſonal courage, which ſeems hereditary to the family, expoſed himſelf to a ſevere fire of cannon as well as muſketry; and, in the

* *A. D.* 1743.

midſt

midſt of the ranks, encouraged his troops by his preſence and example. The whole of the battle, on either ſide, exhibited more courage than conduct. The Engliſh had the honor of the day; but the French ſoon after took poſſeſſion of the field of battle, treating the wounded Engliſh that were left behind with a clemency unprecedented in ancient hiſtory, and that ſerves to ſhow how ſuperior the preſent times are in point of humanity to the boaſted ages of antiquity. Though the Engliſh were victorious upon this occaſion, yet the earl of Stair, who commanded, did not aſſume any honor from ſuch a victory: he was unwilling that his reputation ſhould ſuffer for meaſures, which he was not allowed to conduct; he therefore ſolicited, and obtained leave to reſign; and the Britiſh troops deſiſted from further operations that campaign.

Mean while the French went on with vigor on every quarter: they oppoſed prince Charles of Lorrain, they interrupted his progreſs in his attempts to paſs the Rhine, and gained ſome ſucceſſes in Italy; but their chief expectations were placed in a projected invaſion of England. Cardinal Fleury was now dead, and cardinal Tencin ſucceeded in his place; this was a perſon of a very different character from his predeceſſor, being proud, turbulent, and enterpriſing. France, from the violence of parliamentary diſputes in England, had been long perſuaded that the country was ripe for a revolution, and only wanted the preſence of the pretender to induce the majority to declare againſt

the reigning family. Several needy adventurers who wiſhed for a change, ſome men of broken fortunes, and almoſt all the Roman catholics of the kingdom, endeavoured to confirm the court of France in theſe ſentiments. An invaſion therefore was actually projected. Charles, ſon of the old chevalier St. George, departed from Rome in the diſguiſe of a Spaniſh courier, and proſecuting his journey to Paris, had an audience of the French king. The troops deſigned for this expedition amounted to fifteen thouſand; preparations were made for embarkthem at Dunkirk, and ſome other of the neareſt ports to England, under the eye of the young pretender; and ſeven thouſand of the number actually went on board. The duke de Roquefeuille, with twenty ſhips of the line, was to ſee them landed ſafely in England; and count Saxe was to command them, when put aſhore. The whole project, however, was diſconcerted by the appearance of Sir John Norris, with a ſuperior fleet, making up againſt them: the French fleet was obliged to put back; a very hard gale of wind damaged their tranſports beyond redreſs. All hopes of invaſion were now fruſtrated; and, at length, the French thought fit openly to declare war.

But, though fortune ſeemed to favor England on this occaſion, yet, on others, ſhe was not equally propitious. The combined fleets of France and Spain, for ſome time, fought the Britiſh armament under admiral Matthews and Leſtock, though with inferior forces, and came off upon nearly equal terms. Such a parity

of ſucceſs in England was regarded as a defeat*. Both the Engliſh admirals were tried by a court-martial: Matthews, who had fought the enemy with intrepidity, was declared incapable of ſerving for the future in his majeſty's navy; Leſtock, who had kept aloof, was acquitted with honor, for he had intrenched himſelf within the punctilios of diſcipline: he barely did his duty; a man of honor, when his country is at ſtake, ſhould do more.

The proceedings in the Netherlands were ſtill more unfavorable. The French had aſſembled a formidable army of one hundred and twenty thouſand men; the chief command of which was given to count Saxe. This general was originally a ſoldier of fortune, and natural ſon to Auguſtus king of Poland, by the famous counteſs of Kœnigſmark. He had been bred from his youth in camps, and had ſhown the moſt early inſtances of cool intrepidity. He, in the beginning of the war, had offered his ſervice to ſeveral crowns, and among the reſt, it is ſaid, to that of England; but his offers were rejected. He was poſſeſſed of great military talents; and, by long habit, preſerved an equal compoſure in the midſt of battle as in a drawingroom at court. On the other ſide, the allied forces, conſiſting of Engliſh, Hanoverians, Dutch, and Auſtrians, did not amount to above ſeventy thouſand. Theſe were incapable of withſtanding ſuch a ſuperior force, and commanded by ſuch a general. The French beſieged

* *A. D.* 1744.

and took Friburgh before they went into winter quarters, and early the next campaign inveſted the city of Tournay. The allies were reſolved to prevent the loſs of this city by a battle. Their army was inferior, and they were commanded by the duke of Cumberland. Notwithſtanding theſe diſadvantages, they marched toward the enemy *, and took poſt in ſight of the French, who were encamped on an eminence; the village of Antoine on the right, a wood on their left, and the town of Fontenoy before them. This advantageous ſituation did not repreſs the ardor of the Engliſh; on the thirtieth day of April the duke of Cumberland marched to the attack at two in the morning. The Britiſh infantry preſſed forward, bore down all oppoſition, and, for near an hour, were victorious. Marſhal Saxe was at that time ſick of the ſame diſorder of which he afterward died. He viſited all the poſts in a litter, and ſaw, notwithſtanding all appearances, that the day was his own. The Engliſh column without command, by a mere mechanical courage, had advanced upon the enemies lines, which formed an avenue on each ſide to receive them. The French artillery began to play upon this forlorn body; and, though they continued for a long time unſhaken, they were obliged to retreat about three in the afternoon. This was one of the moſt bloody battles that had been fought this age; the allies left upon the field near twelve thouſand ſlain, and the French bought their victory with near an equal number.

* *A. D.* 1745.

This blow, by which Tournay was taken, gave the French a manifeſt ſuperiority all the reſt of the campaign, which they did not forego during the continuance of the war. The emperor Charles VII, who had been raiſed to the throne from the dukedom of Bavaria, and for whom the war firſt began, was now dead; yet this did not in the leaſt reſtore tranquillity to Europe. The grand duke of Tuſcany, huſband to the queen of Hungary, was declared emperor upon his deceaſe; but the war between France and the allies ſtill continued, and the original views and intereſts ſeemed now quite forgotten, that had at firſt inſpired the contention.

LETTER LX.

THE intended French invaſion had rouſed all the attention of the Engliſh miniſtry; and nothing but loyalty breathed throughout the whole kingdom. The adminiſtration of affairs being committed to the earl of Harrington, the earl of Cheſterfield, and others, who enjoyed a great ſhare of popularity, the views of the crown were no longer thwarted by an oppoſition in parliament. The admirals Rowley and Warren had retrieved the honor of the Britiſh flag, and made ſeveral rich captures. Louiſburgh, in the iſland of Cape Breton, in North America, a place of great conſequence to the Britiſh commerce, ſurrendered to general Pepperel; while, a ſhort time after, two French Eaſt-India ſhips, and another from Peru, laden with treaſure, ſuppoſing the place ſtill in

poſſeſſion of the French, ſailed into the harbour, and their capture added to the Engliſh ſucceſs. It was in this period of univerſal ſatisfaction that the ſon of the old pretender reſolved to make an effort at gaining the Britiſh crown. Young Charles Edward, the adventurer in queſtion, had been bred in a luxurious court without ſharing its effeminacy: he was enterpriſing and ambitious; but, either from inexperience, or natural inability, utterly unequal to the undertaking. He was flattered by the raſh, the ſuperſtitious, and the needy, that the kingdom was ripe for a revolt; that the people could no longer bear the immenſe load of taxes, which was daily increaſing; and that the moſt conſiderable perſons of the kingdom would gladly ſeize the opportunity of crowding to his ſtandard. Being furniſhed with ſome money, and ſtill larger promiſes from France, who fanned this ambition in him, from which they hoped to gain ſome advantages, he embarked for Scotland on board a ſmall frigate, accompanied by the marquis Tullibardine, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and a few other deſperate adventurers. For the conqueſt of the whole Britiſh empire, he brought with him ſeven officers, and arms for two thouſand men. Fortune, which ever perſecuted his family, ſeemed no way more favorable to him: his convoy, a ſhip of ſixty guns, was ſo diſabled in an engagement with an Engliſh man of war, called the *Lion*, that it returned to Breſt, while he was obliged to continue his courſe to the weſtern parts of Scotland; and, landing on the coaſt of Lochabar, July 27, was, in a little time,

joined by ſome chiefs of the Highland clans, and their vaſſals. Theſe chiefs had ever continued to exerciſe an hereditary juriſdiction over all their tenants. This power of life and death, veſted in the lords of the manor, was a privilege of the old feudal law, long aboliſhed in England, but which had been confirmed to the Scotch lairds at the time of the union. From hence we ſee, that a chief had the power of commanding all his vaſſals, and that immediate death was the conſequence of their diſobedience.

By means of theſe chiefs, therefore, he ſoon ſaw himſelf at the head of fifteen hundred men; and invited others to join him by his manifeſtoes, which were diſperſed throughout all the Highlands.

The boldneſs of this enterpriſe aſtoniſhed all Europe; it awakened the fears of the puſillanimous, the pity of the wiſe, and the loyalty of all. The whole kingdom ſeemed unanimously bent upon oppoſing the enterpriſe, which they were ſenſible, as being ſupported only by papiſts, would be inſtrumental in reſtoring popery. The miniſtry was no ſooner confirmed of the truth of his arrival, which, at firſt, they could ſcarcely be induced to believe, than Sir John Cope was ordered to oppoſe his progreſs. In the mean time, the young adventurer marched to Perth, where the unneceſſary ceremony was performed of proclaiming the chevalier de St. George, his father, king of Great Britain. The rebel army deſcending from the mountains, ſeemed rather to gather as it went. They advanced toward Edinburgh, which they entered

without oppoſition. Here too the pageantry of proclamation was perſormed, Auguſt 17, in which he promiſed to diſſolve the union, and redreſs the grievances of the country. But, though he was maſter of the capital, yet the citadel, which goes by the name of the *Caſtle*, a ſtrong fortreſs built upon a rock, and commanded by general Gueſt, braved all his attempts. In the mean time, Sir John Cope, who had purſued them to the Highlands, but declined meeting them in their deſcent, now reinforced by two regiments of dragoons, reſolved to march toward Edinburgh, and give them battle. The young adventurer, unwilling to give him time to retreat, attacked him near Preſton-pans, about twelve miles from the capital, and, in a few minutes, put him and his troops totally to the rout. This victory, in which the king loſt about five hundred men, gave the rebels great influence; and, had the pretender taken advantage of the general conſternation, and marched toward England, the conſequence might have been dangerous to the ſafety of the ſtate; but he ſpent the time at Edinburgh, ſeeming to enjoy the uſeleſs parade of royalty, pleaſed at being addreſſed and treated as a king. By this time, he was joined by the earl of Kilmarnock, the lords Elcho, Balmerino, Ogilvy, Pitſligo, and the eldeſt ſon of the lord Lovat. This lord Lovat was the ſame whom we have ſeen upon a former occaſion truſted by the old pretender, and betraying him by taking poſſeſſion of the caſtle of Stirling for king George.

This nobleman, true to neither party, had again altered from his attachment to the houſe of Hanover, and, in ſecret, aided the young chevalier: ſtudious only for his own intereſt, he exerted all the arts of low cunning, to appear an open enemy to the rebellion, yet to give it ſecret aſſiſtance.

While the young pretender thus trifled away the time at Edinburgh (for all delays in dangerous enterpriſes are even worſe than defeats) the miniſtry of Great Britain took every poſſible meaſure to defeat his intentions. Six thouſand Dutch troops, that had come over to the aſſiſtance of the crown, were ſent northward under the command of general Wade; but, as it was then ſaid, theſe could lend no aſſiſtance, as they were, properly ſpeaking, priſoners of France, and upon their parole not to oppoſe that power for the ſpace of one year. However this be, the duke of Cumberland ſoon after arrived from Flanders, and was followed by another detachment of dragoons and infantry; volunteers in different parts of the kingdom employed themſelves in the exerciſe of arms; and every county exerted a generous ſpirit of indignation, both againſt the ambition, the religion, and the allies of the young adventurer.

It would be illiberal and baſe to deny this enterpriſing youth that praiſe which his merit may deſerve. Though he might have brought civil war, and all the calamities attending it, with him, into the kingdom; yet we muſt conſider, that he had ever been taught, that bathing his country in blood was but a juſt aſſertion

of his right; that altering the conſtitution, and perhaps the religion, of his ſuppoſed dominions, was a laudable object of ambition. Thus inſpired, he went forward with vigor, and reſolving to make an irruption into England, he entered it by the weſtern border. On the ſixth day of November, Carliſle was inveſted, and in leſs than three days it ſurrendered. Here he found a conſiderable quantity of arms, and was declared king of Great Britain. General Wade, being apprized of his progreſs, advanced acroſs the country from the oppoſite ſhore; but, receiving intelligence that the enemy were two days march before him, he retreated to his former ſtation. The young pretender now reſolved to proceed, having received aſſurances from France that a conſiderable body of troops would be landed on the ſouthern coaſt of Britain, to make a diverſion in his favor, and flattered with the hopes of being joined by a large body of Engliſh malecontents, as ſoon as he ſhould make his appearance among them. Leaving therefore a ſmall garriſon in Carliſle, which he ſhould rather have left defenceleſs, he advanced to Penrith, marching on foot in a Highland garb, and continued his irruption till he came to Mancheſter, where he eſtabliſhed his headquarters. He was here joined by about two hundred Engliſhmen, who were formed into a regiment, under the command of colonel Townley. From thence he proſecuted his rout to Derby, intending to go by the way of Cheſter into Wales, where he hoped for a great number of adherents. He was, by this time, advanced

within a hundred miles of the capital, which was filled with terror and confuſion. The king reſolved to take the field in perſon. The volunteers of the city were incorporated into a regiment. The practitioners of the law agreed to take the field with the judges at their head. Even the managers of the theatres offered to raiſe a body of their dependents for the ſervice of their country. Yet theſe combinations only ſerved as inſtances of the national terror; for the trading part of the city, and thoſe concerned in the money corporations, were overwhelmed with dejection. They could hope for little ſafety in the courage or diſcipline of a militia, eſpecially as they every hour dreaded an invaſion from France, and an inſurrection of the Roman catholics, and other friends to the expelled family. This therefore was the moment for the advancement of the adventurer's enterpriſe. Had he marched up to the capital, he would undoubtedly have been joined by ſeveral ſecretly attached to his cauſe; but he determined to retreat once more to Scotland, and thus his ſcheme was defeated. In fact, he was but nominally the leader of his forces. His generals, the chiefs of Highland clans, were, from their education, ignorant; and, from their independency, obſtinate. They each embraced peculiar ſyſtems, and began to contend with each other for the pre-eminence; ſo that, after violent diſputes, they reſolved to march back. They effected their retreat to Carliſle without any loſs; and from thence croſſed the rivers Eden and Solway, into Scotland. In this

irruption, however, they preſerved all the rules of war; they deſiſted, in a great meaſure, from rapine; levied contributions; and, in the uſual form, left a garriſon in Carliſle in their retreat; which, a ſhort time after, to the number of four hundred, ſurrendered to the duke of Cumberland priſoners at diſcretion. The pretender being returned to Scotland, proceeded to Glaſgow; from which city he exacted ſevere contributions. Advancing to Stirling, he was joined by lord Lewis Gordon, at the head of ſome forces which had been aſſembled in his abſence; other clans, to the number of two thouſand, came in likewiſe; Spain ſent him ſome ſupplies of money; and, in one or two ſkirmiſhes with the royaliſts, his generals came off with victory; ſo that his affairs once more ſeemed to wear an aſpect of ſucceſs. Being joined by John lord Drummond, he inveſted the caſtle of Stirling, commanded by general Blakeney; but his forces, being unuſed to ſieges, conſumed much time to no purpoſe. General Hawley, who commanded a conſiderable body of forces near Edinburgh, undertook to raiſe the ſiege. He advanced toward the rebel army, and rendezvouſed his whole force at Falkirk, while the rebels lay encamped at no great diſtance. After two days, mutually examining each other's ſtrength, the rebels, on the ſeventeenth day of January, came on in full ſpirits to attack the king's army. The pretender, who ſtood in the front line, gave the ſignal to fire; and the firſt volley ſerved to put Hawley's forces into confuſion. The horſe retreated with precipitation,

and fell in upon their own infantry; the rebels followed their blow; and the greateſt part of the royal army fled with the utmoſt precipitation. They retired in confuſion to Edinburgh, leaving the field of battle, with part of their tents and artillery, to the rebels.

This was the end of all their triumphs. But a new ſcene of conduct was now going to open; for the duke of Cumberland, at that time the favorite of the Engliſh army, had put himſelf at the head of the troops at Edinburgh, which conſiſted of about fourteen thouſand men. He reſolved therefore to come to a battle as ſoon as poſſible: and marched forward, while the young adventurer retired at his approach. The duke advanced to Aberdeen, where he was joined by the duke of Gordon, and ſome other lords attached to his family and cauſe. After having refreſhed his troops there for ſome time, he renewed his march; and, in twelve days, came upon the banks of the deep and rapid river Spey*. This was a place where the rebels might have diſputed his paſſage; but they ſeemed now totally void of all council and ſubordination, without conduct, and without expectation. The duke ſtill proceeded in his purſuit; and, at length, had advice that the enemy had advanced from Inverneſs to the plain of Culloden, which was about nine miles diſtant, and there intended to give him battle**. On this plain the Highlanders were drawn up in order of battle, to the number of eight thouſand men in thirteen

* *A. D.* 1746. ** *April* 15.

diviſions, ſupplied with ſome pieces of artillery. The battle began about one in the afternoon: the cannon of the king's army did dreadful execution among the enemy, while theirs, being but ill ſerved, was ineffectual. One of the great errors in all the pretender's warlike meaſures, was his ſubjecting undiſciplined troops to the forms of artful war, and thus repreſſing their native ferocity, from which alone he could hope for ſucceſs. After they had ſtood the Engliſh fire for ſome time, they, at length, became impatient for cloſe engagement; and about five hundred of them attacked the Engliſh left wing with their accuſtomed fierceneſs. The firſt line being diſordered by this onſet, two battalions advanced to ſupport it, and galled the enemy by a terrible and cloſe diſcharge. At the ſame time the dragoons under Hawley, and the Argyllſhire militia, pulling down a park wall that guarded the enemy's flank, and which the rebels had left but feebly defended, fell in among them, ſword in hand, with great ſlaughter. In leſs than thirty minutes they were totally routed, and the field covered with their wounded and ſlain, to the number of above three thouſand men. Civil war is in itſelf terrible, but ſtill more ſo when heightened by cruelty. How guilty ſoever men may be, it is ever the buſineſs of a ſoldier to remember, that he is only to fight an enemy that oppoſes him, and to ſpare the ſuppliant. This victory was in every reſpect complete; and humanity to the conquered would even have made it glorious. The conquerors often refuſed mercy to wretches

who were defenceleſs or wounded; and ſoldiers were ſeen to anticipate the baſe employment of the executioner.

Thus ſunk all the hopes and ambition of the young adventurer; one ſhort hour deprived him of imaginary thrones and ſceptres, and reduced him from a nominal king to a diſtreſſed forlorn outcaſt, ſhunned by all mankind, except ſuch as ſought to take his life. To the goodnatured, ſubſequent diſtreſs often atones for former guilt; and while reaſon would repreſs humanity, yet our hearts plead in favor of the wretched. The duke, immediately after the deciſive action at Culloden, ordered ſix-and-thirty deſerters tobe executed; the conquerors ſpread terror whereever they came; and, after a ſhort time, the whole country round was one ſcene of ſlaughter, deſolation, and plunder: juſtice ſeemed forgotten, and vengeance aſſumed the name.

In the mean time, the unhappy fugitive adventurer wandered from mountain to mountain, a wretched ſpectator of all theſe horrors, the reſult of his illguided ambition. He now underwent a ſimilarity of adventures with Charles II, after the defeat at Worceſter. He ſometimes found refuge in caves and cottages without attendants, and expoſed to the mercy of peaſants, who could pity but not ſupport him. Sometimes he lay in foreſts, with one or two companions of his diſtreſs, continually purſued by the troops of the conqueror, as there was thirty thouſand pounds bid for his head. Sheridan, an Iriſh adventurer, was he who kept moſt faithfully by him, and inſpired him with courage

to ſupport ſuch incredible hardſhips. He was obliged to truſt his life to the fidelity of above fifty individuals. One day, having walked from morning till night, preſſed by hunger, and worn with fatigue, he ventured to enter a houſe, the owner of which he well knew was attached to the oppoſite party: *The ſon of your king*, ſaid he, entering, *comes to beg a bit of bread and clothes. I know your preſent attachment to my adverſaries, but I believe you have ſufficient honor not to abuſe my confidence, or to take the advantage of my misfortunes. Take theſe rags that have for ſome time been my only covering, and keep them. You may, probably, reſtore them to me one day when ſeated on the throne of the kings of Great Britain.* His hoſt was touched with his diſtreſs, aſſiſted him as far as he was able, and never divulged his ſecret. In this manner he wandered among the frightful wilds of Glengary, for near ſix months, often hemmed round by his purſuers, but ſtill finding ſome expedient to ſave him from captivity and death. At length a privateer of St. Malo, hired by his adherents, arrived at Lochnanach, on which he embarked, and arrived at France in ſafety.

While the prince thus led a wandering and ſolitary life, the ſcaffolds and the gibbets were bathed with the blood of his adherents. Seventeen officers of the rebel army were executed at Kennington-common, in the neighbourhood of London, whoſe conſtancy in death gained more proſelytes to their cauſe than perhaps their victories could have done. Nine were executed

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in the ſame manner at Carliſle; ſix at Brumpton; ſeven at Penrith; and eleven at York. A few obtained pardons; and a conſiderable number were tranſported to the plantations. The earls of Kilmarnock and Cromartie, with the lord Balmerino, were tried by their peers, and found guilty. Cromartie was pardoned; the other two were beheaded on Tower-hill. Kilmarnock, either from conviction, or from the hope of a pardon, owned his crime, and declared his repentance of it. On the other hand, Balmerino, who had from his youth up been bred to arms, died in a more daring manner. When his fellow-ſufferer, as commanded, bid God bleſs king George, Balmerino ſtill held faſt to his principles, and cried out, God bleſs king James, and ſuffered with the utmoſt intrepidity. Lord Lovat, and Mr. Radcliff, the titular earl of Derwentwater, ſuffered the ſame fate with equal reſolution. Thus ended a rebellion, dictated by youth and preſumption, and conducted without art or reſolution. The family of Stewart found fortune become more averſe at every new ſolicitation of her favors. Let private men, who complain of the miſeries of this life, only turn to the viciſſitudes in that family, and learn to bleſs God, and be happy.

LETTER LXI.

A Rebellion quelled, and mercy ſhown to the delinquents, ever ſtrengthens the reigning cauſe. How it might have been in the preſent inſtance, I will not pretend to determine: whether too

much rigor might have been exerted upon the conquered, poſterity muſt determine: actions of this kind are too near our own times to be either judged of or talked of with freedom. Immediately after the rebellion was ſuppreſſed, the legiſlature undertook to eſtabliſh ſeveral regulations in Scotland, which were equally conducive to the happineſs of the people there, and the tranquillity of the united kingdom. The Highlanders, who had, till this time, continued to wear the old military dreſs of the Romans, and who always went armed, were now reformed. Their habits were, by act of parliament, reduced to the modern modes; the obedience they were under to their chiefs was aboliſhed; and the loweſt ſubject of that part of the kingdom was granted a participation of Britiſh freedom.

But, whatever tranquillity might have been reſtored by theſe means at home, the flames of war ſtill continued to rage upon the continent with their accuſtomed violence. The French went forward with rapid ſucceſs, having reduced almoſt the whole Netherlands to their obedience. In vain the Dutch negotiated, ſupplicated, and evaded war; they ſaw themſelves ſtripped of all thoſe ſtrong towns which defended their dominions from invaſion; and they now lay, almoſt defenceleſs, ready to receive terms from their conquerors. The Dutch at this time, were very different from their foreſathers, the brave aſſertors of liberty, in the beginning of the republic; the individuals of the ſtate were now rich, while their government was poor;

they had loſt, in a ſpirit of traffic and luxury, all their generoſity of ſentiment, and deſire of independence; they only ſought riches, regardleſs of public virtue. They were divided in their councils between two factions which now ſubſiſted, namely, that which declared for a ſtadtholder, and that which, with attachments to France, oppoſed his election. The prevalence of either ſide was almoſt equally fatal to liberty: if a ſtadtholder were elected, they then ſaw their conſtitution altered from a republic to a kind of limited monarchy; if the oppoſite party prevailed, they were to feel the weight of a confirmed ariſtocracy, confirmed by French power, and crouching under its authority. Of the two evils they choſe the former; the people, in ſeveral towns, inflamed almoſt to tumult and ſedition, compelled their magiſtrates to declare for the prince of Orange as ſtadtholder, captain-general, and admiral of the United Provinces. The vigorous conſequences of this reſolution immediately appeared: all commerce with the French was prohibited; the Dutch army was augmented; and orders were iſſued to commence hoſtilities againſt the French by ſea and land.

Thus we ſee this war diffuſed throughout the whole ſyſtem of Europe; in ſome meaſure reſembling a diſorder, the ſymptoms of which, at different times, appear in different parts of the body, remitting and raging by turns. At the commencement of the war, we have ſeen the queen of Hungary upon the point of loſing all her poſſeſſions. Soon after we ſaw the unfortunate duke of Bavaria, who had been choſen

emperor by the name of Charles VII, baniſhed from his throne, ſtripped of his hereditary dukedom, and ſhrinking from ſurrounding dangers. We have ſeen the duke of Savoy, now king of Sardinia, changing that ſide which ſome years before he had eſpouſed, and joining with Auſtria and England againſt the ambitious deſigns of France; while Italy ſtill felt all the terrors of war, or rather ſaw foreigners contending with each other for her dominions, the French and Spaniards on one ſide, the Imperialiſts and the king of Sardinia on the other. Thus, Italy, that once gave laws to the world, now ſaw the troops of Germany and Spain, by turns, enter into her territories; and, after various combats, ſhe, at laſt, ſaw the Imperialiſts become maſters. The Spaniards and French loſt the moſt flouriſhing armies, notwithſtanding the excellent conduct of the prince of Conti their general; and, at laſt, after a bloody victory obtained over the Spaniards at St. Lazaro, the beautiful city of Genoa, which had ſided with Spain, was obliged to ſubmit to the conquerors, to ſuffer ſome indignities impoſed upon them, and to pay a moſt ſevere contribution.

The city of Genoa had for ages before maintained its own laws, and boaſted of liberty. Beſide its inner wall, it had another formed by a chain of rocks of more than two leagues extent; but both being built in thoſe times when modern fortification was yet unknown, it was not thought, by its ſenate, capable of making a proper reſiſtance. Upon ſubmitting, the unhappy Italians too ſoon found that no

mercy was to be expected from the court of Vienna, who had ever patronized oppreſſion. More than a million ſterling was demanded for a contribution; a tax, the payment of which muſt have utterly ruined the city. The magiſtrates did all in their power to pay the exorbitant ſum demanded; and the German troops exerciſed every inhumanity in exacting it. The conquerors lived upon the people, and treated them with an inſolence which was natural to them as conquerors, and as Germans. The Genoeſe were, at length, reduced to deſpair, and were reſolved to make a laſt effort for the recovery of their liberty and independence. The Auſtrians took the cannon of the city, in order to tranſport them to Provence, where their arms had already penetrated. The Genoeſe themſelves were obliged to draw thoſe cannons, which they had once conſidered as the defence and ornament of their citadel. It was on this occaſion that an Auſtrian officer ſtruck one of the citizens, who had been employed in this laborious taſk. This blow ſerved to animate the people with their former ſpirit of freedom. They took up arms in every quarter of the town, and ſurpriſed ſome battalions of the Auſtrians, ſurrounded others, and cut them in pieces. The ſenate, uncertain how to proceed, neither encouraged nor ſtopped the citizens, who drove the Auſtrians entirely out, and then appointed commanders, and guarded the walls with the utmoſt regularity.

This revolution in a little city, the tranſactions of which has filled whole folios of hiſtory,

ſhould not be paſſed over without remark: though no longer capable of maintaining its liberties amid the ſhock of the enormous powers of Europe, yet ſtill we find it poſſeſſed of its ancient ſpirit; only to loſe it, however, by the prevailing power of the ſenate, which eſtabliſhed their ariſtocracy on the necks of the citizens, as before.

In this manner we ſee victory and miſcarriage mutually declaring for either; all ſides growing more feeble, and none acquiring any real recompence for the loſſes ſuſtained. Thus, about this time *, the Engliſh made an unſucceſsful expedition into France, in order to attack port l'Orient, in which they came off without any honor. The French gained a conſiderable victory at Rocoux, in Flanders, over the allies, although it procured them no real advantage; and it coſt them a greater number of lives than thoſe whom they obliged to retire. The Dutch, in this general conflict, ſeemed the greateſt loſers. A victory gained over the allies at Lafelt ſerved to reduce them to a ſtill greater degree of diſtruſt in their generals than they had hitherto ſhown; but the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom, the ſtrongeſt fortification of Dutch Brabant, and which put the French in poſſeſſion of the whole navigation of the Schelde, threw them almoſt into deſpair. But theſe victories in favor of France, were counterbalanced with almoſt equal diſappointments. In Italy, the French general, marſhal Belleiſle's brother, at the head of

* A. D. 1746.

thirty-four thouſand men, attempted to penetrate into Piedmont; but his troops were put to the rout, and he himſelf ſlain. The French king equipped an unſucceſsful armament for the recovery of cape Breton; and, not diſcouraged by this failure, fitted out two ſquadrons, one to make a deſcent upon the Britiſh colonies in America, and the other to aſſiſt the operations in the Eaſt Indies. Theſe, however, were attacked by Anſon and Warren, and nine of their ſhips were taken *. Soon after this, commodore Fox, with ſix ſhips of war, took above forty French ſhips laden from St. Domingo; and this loſs was ſoon after followed by another defeat, which the French fleet ſuſtained from admiral Hawke, in which ſeven ſhips of the line and ſeveral frigates were taken.

This variety of ſucceſs ſerved to make all the powers at war heartily deſirous of peace. The ſtates-general had, for ſome years, endeavoured to ſtop the progreſs of a war, in which they could gain no advantages, and had all to loſe. The king of France was ſenſible, that, after conqueſt, was the moſt advantageous opportunity of propoſing terms of peace; and even expreſſed his deſire of general tranquillity, in a perſonal converſation with Sir John Ligonier, who had been made priſoner in the laſt victory obtained by the French at Laſelt. The bad ſucceſs of his admirals at ſea, his generals' misfortunes in Italy, the frequent bankruptcies of his ſubjects, the election of a ſtadtholder in

* *A. D.* 1747.

Holland, who oppoſed his intereſts, his views in Germany entirely fruſtrated by the elevation of the duke of Tuſcany to rule the empire; all theſe contributed to make him weary of the war. An accommodation was therefore reſolved upon; and the contending powers agreed to come to a congreſs at Aix la Chapelle, where the earl of Sandwich and Sir Thomas Robinſon aſſiſted as plenipotentiaries from the king of Great Britain. This treaty, which takes its name from that city, was concluded on the ſeventh day of October; a laſting inſtance of precipitate counſels and Engliſh humility. By this it was agreed, that all priſoners, on each ſide, ſhould be mutually reſtored, and all conqueſts given up: that the duchies of Parma, Placentia, Guaſtalla, ſhould be ceded to don Philip, heir apparent to the Spaniſh throne, and his heirs; but in caſe of his ſucceeding to the crown of Spain, that then theſe dominions ſhould revert to the houſe of Auſtria: that the fortifications of Dunkirk to the ſea ſhould be demoliſhed: that the ſhip annually ſent with ſlaves to the coaſt of Spain, ſhould have this privilege continued for four years: that the king of Pruſſia ſhould be ſecured in the poſſeſſion of Sileſia, which he had conquered; and that the queen of Hungary ſhould be ſecured in her patrimonial dominions. But one article of the peace was more diſpleaſing and afflictive to the Engliſh than all the reſt; for it was agreed, that ſhe ſhould give two perſons of rank and diſtinction to France as noſtages, until reſtitution ſhould be made of all the conqueſts which England poſſeſſed of the enemy,

either in the Eaſt or Weſt Indies. This was a mortifying ſtipulation; but there was no mention made of the ſearching Engliſh ſhips in the American ſeas, upon which the war originally began. The treaty of Utrecht had long been a ſubject of reproach to thoſe by whom it was negotiated; but, with all its faults, the treaty that was juſt concluded was far more deſpicable and erroneous. The honor of the nation was forgotten; its intereſts left undetermined. Yet ſuch was the ſtrange infatuation of the multitude, that the treaty of Utrecht was held in univerſal contempt, and this was extolled with the higheſt ſtrain of panegyric. The truth is, the people were wearied with repeated diſgrace, and only expected an accumulation of misfortunes by continuing the war. The miniſters and their emiſſaries, about this period, had the art of perſuading men to what they thought proper, and repreſented the circumſtances of the nation as flouriſhing, though the public was groaning beneath an immenſe load of debt, and though all meaſures were guided by an ignorant and unconſtitutional faction.

LETTER LXII.

THIS peace might, in every reſpect, be termed only a temporary ceſſation from general hoſtilities; though the war between England and France had actually ſubſided in Europe, yet in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies they ſtill carried on hoſtile operations, both ſides equally culpable, yet each complaining of the infraction.

In the mean time, as Europe enjoyed a temporary tranquillity, the people of England expected, and the government promiſed them, a reſtitution of thoſe bleſſings which had been taken from them by a long and obſtinate war. A magnificent firework was played off upon this occaſion; which, though an uſeleſs and vain expenſe, ſerved to amuſe the populace, and render them more contented with the late precarious treaty.

The miniſtry alſo ſhowed ſome deſire to promote the commerce of the kingdom; and, for this purpoſe, a bill was paſſed for encouraging a Britiſh herring fiſhery, under proper regulations. From ſuch a ſcheme carried into execution, great advantages were expected to accrue: the Dutch, who had long enjoyed the ſole profits ariſing from it, conſidered the ſea as a mine of inexhauſtible wealth. However, experience has ſhown, that the Engliſh were either incapable of turning this fiſhery to the ſame advantage, or that their company was not eſtabliſhed with the moſt ſtrict economy. Private perſons have often been found to make fortunes by this fiſhery; but the company have found themſelves conſiderable loſers.

A ſcheme, which by many was thought ſtill more advantageous to the nation*, was, the encouraging thoſe who had been diſcharged the army or navy to become members of a new colony in North America, called Nova Scotia. To this retreat, it was thought, the waſte of an

* *A. D.* 1749.

exuberant nation might well be drained off; and here thoſe free ſpirits might be kept employed, who, if ſuffered to remain at home, would only prey upon the community. This was a cold climate, and a barren ſoil, where the Engliſh kept a fort, and a ſmall garriſon, rather to intimidate the neighbouring French, and repreſs their encroachments, than to derive any advantages from the improvements of trade, or the cultivation of the country. It was here that a ſcheme was laid for the foundation of a new colony, which might improve the fiſhery upon that coaſt, and become a new ſource of wealth to the mother country. Thus did the nation exchange her hardy and veteran troops for the expectation of precarious wealth. Every colony taken from the parent country ſerves to leſſen its ſtrength; and all the wealth imported into it, after it has become moderately rich, being only uſed as the inſtrument of luxury, inſtead of invigorating the nation, tends to render it more effeminate.

However, it was advertiſed by authority, that all proper encouragement would be given to ſuch officers and private men, who, being diſcharged from the ſervice of the government, ſhould be willing to ſettle in Nova Scotia. Fifty acres of land were granted to every private ſoldier or ſeaman, free from taxes for ten years, and then to pay only one ſhilling a year. Beſide theſe fifty, ten acres more were to be granted to every individual of which each family ſhould conſiſt. Every officer, under the rank of enſign, was to have fourſcore acres; enſigns were to

have two hundred, lieutenants three, captains four, and thoſe above that rank ſix. Such offers failed not to induce numbers to try their fortunes on that deſolate coaſt: and in a little time about four thouſand adventurers, with their families, were carried thither; a town named Halifax was built; and the coloniſts left to glean a ſcanty ſubſiſtence from an ungrateful ſoil. Since that time, notwithſtanding all the encouragement this colony has received from the government, the inhabitants have cleared but a very ſmall part of the woods with which the face of the country is covered. Agriculture is quite forgotten; and the ſettlement entirely ſubſiſts by the ſums expended by the army and navy ſtationed in that part of the weſtern world.

Here, however, thoſe voluntary outcaſts of their country expected to live, though hardly, yet at leaſt ſecurely; but in this they found themſelves diſappointed*. The Indians, a ſavage and fierce people, from the firſt looked upon theſe ſettlements of the Engliſh as an encroachment upon their own liberties; and the French, who were equally jealous, fomented theſe ſuſpicions. Commiſſaries were therefore appointed to meet at Paris, and compromiſe theſe diſputes; but theſe conferences were rendered abortive by mutual cavillings, and all the arts of evaſion.

In the mean time Mr. Pelham, who chiefly conducted the buſineſs of the ſtate, and was eſteemed a man of candor and capacity, laid

* *A. D.* 1754.

a ſcheme for lightening the immenſe load of debt that was laid upon the nation. His plan was to leſſen the national encumberance, by lowering the intereſt which had been promiſed upon the firſt raiſing the ſupply, or obliging the lenders to receive the ſums originally granted. Thoſe who were proprietors of ſtocks, and received, for the uſe of their money, four *per cent.* were, by royal authority, ordered to ſubſcribe their names, ſigniſying their conſent to accept of three pounds ten ſhillings *per cent.* a year after, and three *per cent.* only about ſix years after their thus ſubſcribing; and, in caſe of a refuſal, that the government would pay off the principal.

This ſcheme was attended with the deſired effect; though it, in ſome meaſure, was a force upon the lender, who had originally granted his money upon different terms, yet it was ſalutary to the nation; and, as Machiavel has it, political injuſtice is ſometimes allowable, in order to ſecure national benefits. Beſide this ſalutary meaſure, others were purſued by the miniſter at the helm with equal ſucceſs. The importation of iron from America was allowed, and the trade to Africa laid open to the whole nation, but, at the ſame time, to be ſuperintended by the board of trade and plantation.

But all the advantages the nation reaped from theſe ſalutary meaſures, were not ſufficient to counterbalance the ſtroke which liberty received (as ſome are of opinion) by an unuſual ſtretch of the privileges of the houſe of commons. As this is a point which deſerves the ſtricteſt

attention, permit me to trace it to its ſource. The city of Weſtminſter had long been repreſented by members who were nominated, in ſome meaſure, by the miniſtry. Lord Trentham, having vacated his ſeat in the houſe, by accepting a place under the crown, again declared himſelf a candidate; but met with violent oppoſition. It was objected to him by ſome, that he had been uncommonly active in introducing ſome French ſtrollers, who had come over to exhibit plays upon the ſuppreſſion of our own. This accuſation, whether true or falſe, excited numbers againſt him, who ſtyled themſelves the *independent electors of Weſtminſter*, and named Sir George Vandeput, a private gentleman, as his competitor. The oppoſition reſolved to ſupport their candidate at their own expenſe. They accordingly opened houſes of entertainment, ſolicited votes, and propagated abuſe as uſual. At length, the poll being cloſed, the majority appeared in favor of lord Trentham. A ſcrutiny was demanded by the other ſide; it was protracted by the obſtinacy of both parties: but this alſo turning out in favor of lord Trentham, the independent electors petitioned the houſe, complaining of an undue election, and of partiality and injuſtice of the high bailiff of Weſtminſter, who took the poll. To this petition the houſe paid little regard, but proceeded to examine the high bailiff as to the cauſes that had ſo long protracted the election, who laid the blame upon Mr. Crowle, who had acted as counſel for the petitioners, as alſo on the honorable

Alexander Murray, and one Gibſon, an upholſterer. Theſe three perſons were therefore brought to the bar of the houſe. Crowle and Gibſon, after having aſked pardon upon their knees, and being reprimanded by the houſe, were diſmiſſed. Murray was firſt admitted to bail; but, after ſome witneſſes had depoſed that he had headed a mob to intimidate the voters, it was voted that he ſhould be committed a cloſe priſoner to Newgate; and, to invigorate their meaſures, that he ſhould receive this ſentence at the bar of the houſe on his knees. He accordingly appeared; but, being directed by the ſpeaker to kneel, refuſed to comply. This refuſal threw the whole houſe into a commotion; and it was ordered that he ſhould be committed cloſe priſoner to Newgate, debarred the uſe of pen, ink, and paper, and that no perſon ſhould have acceſs to him without permiſſion of the houſe. This impriſonment he underwent, ſenſible by the conſtitution it could continue no longer than while they continued to ſit: and, at the cloſe of the ſeſſion, he was conducted from priſon to his own houſe, amid the acclamations of the people. He now was thought by many entirely free from all farther perſecution: but in this they were miſtaken; for, at the opening of the enſuing ſeſſions, a motion was made, that Mr. Murray ſhould be again committed cloſe priſoner to the Tower. Hitherto it was ſuppoſed by ſeveral, that the houſe of commons had acted with a ſpirit of reſentment; now it was thought that they made an attempt at extending their privileges. Though

the delinquent, a perſon of no great conſequence in himſelf, had taken the prudent precaution of retiring from their reſentment, yet ſeveral of the people ſaw that the houſe conſidered itſelf rather as a body diſtinct from the people than the guardians of the people; and, inſtead of maintaining the liberties of the ſubject in general, had attempted to increaſe their own. Some thought they ſaw in this meaſure the ſeeds of future ariſtocracy; that the houſe of commons conſtituted themſelves judges of their own privileges; and that the liberty of every individual in ſociety was at the diſpoſal of a body who profeſſed acting chiefly for their own honor.

However this may be, another meaſure was ſoon after taken, which, in reality, made diſtinctions among the people, and laid an unpaſſable line between the rich and poor. This was an act for the better preventing clandeſtine marriages, and for the more public ſolemnization of that ceremony. The grievance complained of, and which this law was to redreſs, was, that the ſons and daughters of opulent families were often ſeduced into marriage, before they had acquired ſufficient experience in life to be ſenſible of the diſparity of fortune in the match. This ſtatute therefore enacted, that the bans of marriage ſhould be regularly publiſhed three ſucceſſive Sundays, in the church of the pariſh where both parties had reſided for one month at leaſt before the ceremony: that a marriage which was ſolemnized without this previous publication, or a licence obtained from

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the biſhop's court, ſhould be void, and the perſon who ſolemnized it ſhould be tranſported for ſeven years. This act was, at that time, thought replete with conſequences injurious to ſociety; and experience has manifeſted ſome of them; villains have gone about deceiving ignorant women, under a pretence of marriage, and then have left them without redreſs. The poor were thus rendered utterly incapable of making alliances with the rich; and the wealth of the nation has thus been more liable to accumulation in opulent families. It has been thought to impede that ardor which impels many to marry; and to clog a ceremony of the moſt infinite advantage to ſociety, with procraſtination and delay. Some have affirmed, that debaucheries and lewdneſs have become more frequent ſince the enacting this law; and it is believed that the numbers of the people are upon the decline.

This ſeſſion of parliament was alſo diſtinguiſhed by another act equally unpopular, and, perhaps, equally injurious to the religion of the community. This was a law for naturalizing the Jews. The miniſters boldly affirmed, that ſuch a law would greatly contribute to the advantage of the nation; that it would increaſe the credit and commerce of the kingdom, and ſet a laudable example of political toleration. Many others, however, were of very different ſentiments: they ſaw that greater favor was ſhown by this bill to Jews, than to ſome other ſects profeſſing the Chriſtian religion; that an introduction of this people into the kingdom

would diſgrace the character of the nation, and cool the zeal of the natives, already too lukewarm. However, notwithſtanding all oppoſition, this bill was paſſed into a law; nor was it till the enſuing ſeſſion of parliament, that it was thought neceſſary to be repealed.

An act, equally unpopular with the two former, was now alſo paſſed, which contained regulations for the better preſerving the game. By this none but men already poſſeſſed of a ſtated fortune had a privilege of carrying a gun, or deſtroying game, though even upon the grounds which he himſelf rented. This totally damped all that martial ſpirit among the lower orders of mankind, by preventing their handling thoſe arms which might one day be neceſſary to defend their country; and gave the rich the ſole enjoyment of a pleaſure, which, before, had been conſidered as the common privilege of humanity. Such were the laws paſſed this ſeſſion *; through all which a ſpirit of ariſtocracy was diſcerned by ſome. The body of the rich, no longer fearing oppreſſion from the throne, or an infringement of their own liberties, now began to lean heavy upon the poor, and to conſider the intereſts of that uſeful part of ſociety as entirely diſtinct from their own. They never omitted, however, their uſual addreſſes to the throne; and this ſeſſion was remarkable for an addreſs of thanks to his majeſty, for maintaining, and rendering permanent, the

* *A. D.* 1756.

general tranquillity of Europe, at a time when war was kindling in almoſt every quarter of the world.

LETTER LXIII.

IF we ſeek for the origin of the war which now began to threaten univerſal devaſtation, we ſhall find it kindling up in ſeveral countries, both of Europe, America, and Aſia, at one and the ſame time. Moſt other national conteſts have ariſen from ſome one principal cauſe; but this war ſeems to have been produced by the concurrence of ſeveral, or it may be conſidered as the continuance of the late war, which had not been effectually extinguiſhed by the defective treaty of Aix la Chapelle.

In Aſia, upon the coaſt of Malabar, the Engliſh and French had never ceaſed hoſtilities. The claims of Pruſſia and Auſtria, upon the territories of Sileſia, had never been thoroughly adjuſted. The limits of Nova Scotia, inhabited by the Engliſh, and bordered upon by the French, were never preciſely determined; and, ſouthward, the boundaries of Acadia, an extenſive country belonging to the French, and bordering upon Virginia, were equally left uncertain. Negotiations had long been carried on to determine theſe differences; but what could reaſon do in determining diſputes in which there were no certain principles to be guided by? The limits of theſe countries had never been ſettled; for they were, before this time, thought too remote or too inſignificant to employ much

attention: and it was not probable, that powers, who had no other right to the countries in diſpute but that of invaſion, would have equity enough to agree upon ſharing the ſpoil.

The right which any of the contending powers pretended to, might, in the eye of reaſon, be thought very controvertible; but the convenience which either party was to derive from the enjoyment of their peculiar claims was not ſo uncertain. As the diſſenſions ſeemed to begin in North America, we muſt turn to that country to conſider their riſe. The French had been the firſt cultivators of Nova Scotia, and, by great induſtry and long perſeverance, rendered that ſoil, naturally barren, ſomewhat more fertile and capable of ſuſtaining nature with very little aſſiſtance from Europe. This country, however, had frequently changed maſters, until the Engliſh were acknowledged as the rightful poſſeſſors by the treaty of Utrecht. The poſſeſſion of this country, in any other nation, would expoſe our colonies to perpetual invaſion, and aſſiſt them in acquiring a ſuperiority in commerce, and the nothern fiſheries. It has been already obſerved, that we had an infant colony upon that coaſt, which was chiefly ſupported by royal bounty, and ſtruggled with all the diſadvantages of the ſevere climate, and the ungrateful ſoil. But it had an obſtruction to its growth ſtill more formidable than either. The French, who had been long ſettled in the back parts of the country, continually ſpirited up the Indians to repel the new comers; ſo that ſome of them were actually murdered, or

ſold to the French at Lewiſburg. Theſe violations were complained of, and complaint produced recrimination; ſo that the two powers of France and England were negotiating with, accuſing, and deſtroying each other all at one time.

Now alſo began to be obſerved another ſource of diſpute, which promiſed as much uneaſineſs as the former. The French, pretending firſt to have diſcovered the mouth of the river Miſſiſippi, claimed the whole adjacent country toward New Mexico on the eaſt, and quite to the Apalachian mountains on the weſt; and finding ſeveral Engliſhmen, who had ſettled beyond theſe mountains, both from motives of commerce, and invited by the natural beauties of the country, they drove them away, and built ſuch forts as would command the whole country around. It was now, therefore, ſeen, that their intentions were to ſurround the Engliſh colonies, which lay along the ſhore, by taking poſſeſſion of the internal parts of the country that lay on the back of our ſettlements; and being already poſſeſſed of the northern and ſouthern ſhores, thus to encloſe us on every ſide, and ſecure to themſelves all trade with the natives of the country. The Engliſh therefore juſtly apprehended, that, if the French were able to unite their northern colonies, which were traded into by the river St. Lawrence, to their ſouthern, which were acceſſible by the river Miſſiſippi, they muſt, in time, become maſters of the whole territory; and, by having a wide country to increaſe in, would ſoon multiply, and become every year more dangerous.

The government of England, having long complained of theſe encroachments, determined, at length, to repel force by force, and to cut the knot of negotiation, which they could not untie. Orders were deſpatched to the governors of the provinces to unite into a confederacy for their mutual ſecurity; and, if poſſible, to bring the Indians over to their cauſe. The Indians were a fierce, ſavage people, unacquainted with the arts of peace, and from infancy trained to the practice of war. It had long been the method of the Engliſh to cultivate their friendſhip in times of danger, but to ſlight their alliance in circumſtances of tranquillity: this, in ſome meaſure, ſerved to alienate their affections from our government; but the fraud and avarice of our merchants, particularly of the *Ohio Company*, who ſold them bad merchandiſes, and treated them with equal inſolence and perfidy, ſerved to confirm their averſion. Beſides, there was ſomething in the diſpoſition of the French ſettlers in theſe regions more ſimilar to theirs: the French, like the natives, were hardy, enterpriſing, and poor; they naturally therefore joined with thoſe allies, from conquering of whom they could expect no plunder; and declared againſt the Engliſh coloniſts, who were rich, frugal, and laborious, and whoſe ſpoils they conſequently were the more deſirous to ſhare.

Thus then the Engliſh had not only the French, but almoſt the whole body of the Indian nations to oppoſe; yet this confederacy againſt them did not give a greater union to the different

provinces, whoſe intereſt it was to oppoſe it. Some of the provinces, who, from their ſituation, had little to fear from the enemy, or little advantages to expect from victory, declined furniſhing their ſhare of the ſupplies; the governors of ſome other colonies, who had been men of broken fortunes, and had come from their native country to retrieve them by acts of rapacity and oppreſſion here, were ſo much dreaded or hated, that they loſt all influence in inſpiring the coloniſts with a proper ſpirit of defence. The miniſtry, however, at home, began to exert itſelf for their defence, and their meaſures were haſtened by hoſtilities already commenced, there having been, for ſome time, a ſkirmiſhing between general Lawrence to the north, and colonel Waſhington to the ſouth, with parties of the French, in which the latter were victorious. It would be tedious, as well as uninforming, to relate all the preparations that now began to be made by either party; or to load this account with barbarous names and unimportant marches; or to recount the alternate victories and defeats of either ſide: be it ſufficient to obſerve, that they ſeemed, in ſome meaſure, to have imbibed a ferocity of manners from the ſavage people with whom they fought, and exerciſed various cruelties, either from a ſpirit of repriſal or cruelty.

Four operations were undertaken by the Engliſh at the ſame time*: one commanded by colonel Monckton, to drive the French from the

* *A. D.* 1756.

encroachments they had made upon the province of Nova Scotia; another, on the ſouth, againſt Crown Point, under the command of general Johnſon; a third, commanded by general Shirley, againſt Niagara; and a fourth, ſtill farther to the ſouth, againſt Du Queſne, under the conduct of general Braddock. In theſe reſpective expeditions Monckton was ſucceſsful; Johnſon victorious, though without effect; Shirley was thought dilatory, and his expedition deferred to another ſeaſon; but the fortunes of Braddock are ſo extraordinary as to require a more ample detail. This general was recommended to this ſervice by the duke of Cumberland, who was juſtly ſenſible of his courage and knowledge in the art of war. Theſe two advantages, however, which, upon other occaſions, are thought the higheſt requiſites of a general; were, in ſome meaſure, conducive to this commander's overthrow. His courage made him obſtinate; and his ſkill in war was improper to be exerted in a country where there were no regular advances to be made, nor a marſhalled enemy to encounter. This brave but unfortunate man ſet forward upon this expedition in June, and left fort Cumberland on the tenth, at the head of two thouſand two hundred men, directing his march to that part of the country where colonel Waſhington had been defeated the year before. Upon his arrival there, he was informed that the French at Fort du Queſne expected a reinforcement of five hundred men; he therefore reſolved, with all haſte, to advance, and attack them before they became

too powerful by this assistance. Leaving, therefore, colonel Dunbar, with eight hundred men to bring up the provisions, stores, and heavy baggage, as fast as the nature of the service would permit, he marched forward with the rest of his army through a country equally dangerous from its forests and savage inhabitants; a country where Europeans had never before attempted to penetrate; wild, solitary, and hideous. Still, however, he advanced with intrepidity, through the deserts of Oswego, regardless of the enemy's attempts, taking no care previously to explore the woods and thickets, as if the nearer he approached the enemy, the less regardless he was of danger. At length, on the eighth of July, he encamped within ten miles of Fort du Quesne, which he intended to attack, and the next day he resumed his march, without so much as endeavouring to get intelligence of an enemy he despised. With this confidence he was marching forward, his soldiers promising themselves a speedy cessation from their harassing march, and all things seemed to promise success; but upon a sudden his whole army was astonished by a general discharge of arms, from an unseen enemy, along the front and left flank. It was now too late to think of retreating; his troops had passed into the defile, which the enemy had artfully permitted before they attempted to fire. His vanguard therefore fell back, in consternation, upon the main body; and the panic soon became general. The officers alone disdained to fly, while Braddock himself at their head, discovered the greatest

intrepidity, and the higheſt imprudence: he never thought of retreating, but obſtinately continued on the ſpot where he was; and gave orders to the few brave men who ſurrounded him to form according to the rules of war, and regularly advance againſt the enemy. An enthuſiaſt to the diſcipline of the field, he deſired to bring the ſpirit of a German campaign into the wilds of Niagara. In the mean time, his officers fell thick about him, while he ſtill continued to iſſue out orders with compoſure, though he had five horſes ſhot under him, and though the whole body of his troops was fled. At length, receiving a muſket ſhot through the lungs, he dropped, and a total confuſion enſued. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage of the army, were left to the enemy; the general's cabinet of letters alſo ſhared the ſame fate. The loſs of the Engliſh, in this unhappy ſurpriſe, amounted to ſeven hundred men; and the remainder of the army, ſome time after, returned to Philadelphia. It was in this manner the expedition of general Braddock terminated, from which England had expected ſuch advantages. In all actions that excite the applauſe and admiration of mankind, a part of their ſucceſs is owing to conduct, and a part to fortune. Of the latter Braddock was totally forſaken; he was unſucceſsful; and the ungrateful world are unwilling to grant him the former.

Thus unfortunate were the beginnings of this war, with regard to England: it was reſolved, therefore, that no meaſures were now to be preſerved with the French; and orders were

given to take their ſhips wherever found, though there was yet no formal declaration of war. With this order the naval commanders very readily and willingly complied; ſo that ſoon the Engliſh ports were filled with ſhips taken from the enemy, and kept as an indemnification for thoſe forts which the enemy had unjuſtly poſſeſſed themſelves of in America. The French complained loudly againſt the injuſtice of this proceeding; they repreſented it to the reſt of Europe, as a breach of that faith which ſhould be obſerved among nations, as a piratical meaſure, diſgraceful to the moſt ſavage people. Their memorials were anſwered by the Engliſh, with ſome ſhow of reaſon. However, it muſt be owned, that, as a declaration of war was a ceremony eaſily performed, it would have been more conſiſtent with the honor of the miniſtry to have purſued the uſual methods of conteſt which had been long eſtabliſhed in Europe. The truth is, the miniſtry were now divided between peace and war; they ſaw the neceſſity of vigorous meaſures, but they were afraid to throw off the maſk of peace entirely. Henry Pelham, who had long guided at the helm of affairs with candor and capacity, had for ſome time been dead, and his place ſupplied by Sir Thomas Robinſon, who, though a ſenſible miniſter, and a favorite of the king, was of no great weight in council, and, conſequently, ſoon under a neceſſity of reſigning; and Mr. Fox was put in his place. The adminiſtration was alſo new formed in other reſpects, by the taking in ſeveral other new members.

Thoſe who had long been in the miniſtry were, it is thought, for peace; thoſe, on the contrary, who were newly taken into the direction of affairs, expected to ſupplant their rivals by an oppoſite ſyſtem, and were conſequently for war. The leader of this party, therefore, warmly ſolicited for war, ſeconded by the juſtice of the cauſe, and the general voice of the people; thoſe who oppoſed him expected to effect by negotiation all that arms could achieve. Whatever might have been the motives for protracting the declaration, the French ſeemed to convince Europe of their moderation upon this attack, by neither declaring war nor making any repriſals. However, they threatened England with a formidable invaſion: ſeveral bodies of troops moved to the coaſts adjacent to ours; their miniſters exclaimed loudly in foreign courts; and ſuch preparations were made, as ſhowed a reſolution of carrying the war into the heart of Great Britain. Theſe preparations had the deſired effect, filling the nation with conſternation, turbulence, and clamor. The people ſaw themſelves expoſed without arms, leaders, or diſcipline, while the miniſtry were timid, unpopular, and wavering. In this ſituation the Dutch were applied to for ſix thouſand men, which, by treaty, they were to ſend England, in caſe of its being threatened with an invaſion: which demand, however, by affected delays, was put off ſo long, that the king, unwilling to come to an open rupture with the republic, deſiſted from it; for which they returned his majeſty thanks. Such are the advantages England

is to expect from relying on assistance from any other quarter than its native strength and unanimity; and every day seems to convince us of the absurdity of political alliances, which are never observed, as wanting friendship to bind, or force to compel.

In this timid situation the ministry were eager to catch at any assistance; a body therefore of Hessians and Hanoverians, amounting to about ten thousand, were brought over to protect about as many millions of Englishmen, who, with swords in their hands, were able to defend themselves; but such was the vile complexion of this period, that the whole kingdom presented nothing but one picture of discontent, terror, and distrust. The ministry was execrated for having reduced the nation to such circumstances of disgrace, as to be thought to stand in need of preservation from a few German mercenaries; but what could be expected from such a ministry, who were possessed neither of the arts nor the integrity of government?

However, the French were by no means serious in this intended descent: their only design was to draw off the attention of the English ministry from an expedition which was actually going forward against Minorca, an island in the Mediterranean, which we had formerly taken from Spain, and had been secured to us by repeated treaties. But the ministry of England were too much infected with the more domestic terror to take sufficient precautions to guard this place, though they had early notice of the enemy's intentions. Instead therefore of sufficiently

ſecuring the iſland with a proper garriſon, or of detaching a ſquadron that, in all reſpects, ſhould be ſuperior to the French fleet in the Mediterranean, they only ſent ten men of war upon this ſervice, poorly manned and indifferently provided, under the command of admiral Byng, whoſe character in the navy was by no means eſtabliſhed, with orders to reinforce the garriſon of St. Philip's with one battalion from Gibraltar: this command, however, the governor of that place thought it unſafe to obey.

The admiral ſent upon this ſervice reinforced his fleet by a detachment of men at Gibraltar; and, ſailing toward Minorca, was joined in the way by another man of war, from whom he learned that Minorca was actually beſieged, and the French fleet deſtined to ſupport the operations by land. He ſoon knew the reality of this information, when, approaching the iſland, he ſaw the French banners diſplayed, and the batteries opened againſt the caſtle of St. Philip's, upon which was ſtill diſplayed the Engliſh flag. The appearance of the French fleet, ſoon after, ſtill more ſtrongly engaged his attention; he drew up his ſhips in line of battle, and determined to act upon the defenſive. Byng had been formerly thought eminent in naval operations, to which he was early bred, but he had hitherto exhibited no proofs of courage. Men are generally moſt apt to pride themſelves upon thoſe talents for which they are moſt praiſed: and this was the caſe with this unfortunate commander; he ſacrificed his reputation for courage, to the hopes of being applauded

for his conduct. The French fleet advanced; a part of the Engliſh fleet engaged; the admiral ſtill kept aloof, giving prudent reaſons for his remiſſneſs in coming to action; till, at length, the French admiral, taking the advantage of the Engliſhman's heſitation, ſailed ſlowly away to join the van of his fleet, which had been already diſcomfited. The Engliſh, for a while, continued the purſuit; but the opportunity of coming to a cloſe engagement was now loſt, and never preſented itſelf again.

Byng was ſtill reſolved to act with his uſual caution: he called a council of war, wherein it was repreſented, that he was much inferior to the enemy in ſhips and men; that the relief of Minorca was impracticable; and that it was moſt adviſable to ſail back to Gibraltar, which might require immediate protection. This repreſentation was almoſt unanimouſly agreed to, and put accordingly in execution. His puſillanimous conduct, however, ſoon reached his native country, where it excited almoſt a phrenſy of reſentment. The miniſtry were alſo thought to fan the flame, which ſerved to turn the public eye from their own miſconduct in ſending ſo weak an armament. Byng, in the mean time, remained at Gibraltar, no way ſuſpecting the ſtorm that was gathering at a diſtance; but talked and wrote even as if he expected the thanks of his king, and the applauſe of his countrymen: but he was ſoon awaked from this dream, by a letter from the miniſtry, giving him notice, that he was recalled; and another ſoon after, by which

directions were given that he ſhould be ſent home under arreſt. Upon his arrival in England, he was committed a cloſe priſoner to Greenwich Hoſpital, and numberleſs arts uſed to inflame the populace againſt him. Long before his trial, ſeveral addreſſes were ſent up from different counties, crying out for juſtice againſt the delinquent. The induſtry of his friends, however, was not remiſs upon this occaſion; they expoſtulated with the multitude, and attempted to divert the whole of univerſal hatred upon the miniſtry, who, at worſt, only deſerved a ſhare. But, ſoon after, the news of the ſurrender of Fort St. Philip to the French inflamed the people beyond all meaſure. This fortreſs had been reckoned, next to Gibraltar, the ſtrongeſt in Europe, the works having been planned by the celebrated Vauban; and, both from the nature of the ſoil, which was one ſolid rock, and the peculiarity of the ſituation, it was thought almoſt impregnable. In order to make themſelves maſters of this important fortreſs, the French, under the command of the duke de Richelieu, landed near twenty thouſand men, which, by continual aſſault, and having gained an outwork, at laſt made themſelves maſters of the place. The Engliſh governor, general Blakeney, however, had very honorable terms of capitulation, and marched out with all the enſigns of war. Yet, perhaps, in truth, the harder the conditions a garriſon is obliged to accept, the more honorable it is to the commander, as they denote his extremity in being reduced to accept of them.

The

The Engliſh now ſaw themſelves every where defeated; in America their armies were cut in pieces; in Europe their garriſons taken; the people trembling under the dread of an invaſion; a few mercenaries brought in for their defence, who, in turn, became formidable to the natives; all theſe circumſtances concurred to exaſperate the people; but there was no object on whom to wreak their vengeance, but the unhappy Byng, who, in a manner, was already voted to deſtruction. War was now proclaimed with the uſual ſolemnity, though it was now but a denunciation after having ſtruck the blow. The Hanoverians were ſent back to their own country, and the preparations were made for trying admiral Byng in the uſual form. On the twenty-eighth day of December his trial began before a court martial in the harbour of Portſmouth, where, after a ſcrutiny of ſeveral days, his judges came to a reſolution, that he had not done his utmoſt, during the engagement, to deſtroy the enemy, which it was his duty to have engaged. They therefore unanimouſly were of opinion, that he fell under the twelfth article of war, which poſitively ordered death to any perſon who, in the time of action, ſhould withdraw, keep back, or not come into fight, or who ſhould not do his utmoſt, through either motives of cowardice, negligence, or diſaffection. He was therefore adjudged to be ſhot on board whatever ſhip the lords of the admiralty ſhould pleaſe to direct; but his judges, at the ſame time, recommended him to mercy, as they could not tell the motives of his keeping

aloof. By such a sentence they expected to have satisfied the national animosity against him, and yet to have screened themselves from the consciousness of severity. Whatever the government might wish to do is uncertain; but the cry of vengeance was too loud to be disregarded: his majesty therefore referred the sentence to the twelve judges, who were unanimously of opinion that the sentence was legal; wherefore the king resolved that he should suffer the extremity of the law. Still, however, there was another attempt made to save him; one of those who had been his judges at Portsmouth, and who was also a member of the house of commons, informed that assembly, that he, as well as some others, who had sat upon the admiral's trial, desired to be released from the oath of secrecy imposed upon courts martial, that they might disclose the grounds on which sentence of death had passed upon admiral Byng, and perhaps discover such circumstances as might show the sentence to be improper. To this the house paid little regard; but his majesty thought fit to respite the execution till the scruples of the court martial should be more clearly explained. A bill therefore passed the house of commons for releasing them from their oath; but when it came to be debated among the lords, and after the members of the court martial were examined touching their reasons, the peers found no reason for passing the bill, and it was rejected. The admiral, being thus abandoned to his fate, resolved at least, by the bravery of his death, in some measure, to show

the injuſtice of the imputation of his being a coward. He maintained to the laſt his natural ſerenity; and, on the day fixed for his execution, when the boats belonging to the fleet, being manned and armed, attended the ſolemnity in the harbour, the admiral advanced from the cabin, where he had been impriſoned, to the deck, the place appointed for execution, with a compoſed ſtep, and reſolute countenance. He then delivered a paper, containing the following addreſs: *A few moments will now deliver me from virulent perſecution, and fruſtrate the malice of my enemies. Nor need I envy them a life ſubject to the ſenſations my injuries, and the injuſtice done me, muſt create. Perſuaded I am, that juſtice will be done to my reputation hereafter. The manner and cauſe of raiſing and keeping up the popular clamor and prejudice againſt me, will be ſeen through. I ſhall be conſidered as a victim deſtined to divert the indignation and reſentment of an injured and deluded people from the proper objects. My enemies themſelves muſt now think me innocent. Happy for me, at this my laſt moment, that I know my own innocence, and am conſcious that no part of my country's misfortunes can be owing to me! I heartily wiſh the ſhedding my blood may contribute to the happineſs and ſervice of my country; but I cannot reſign my juſt claim to a faithful diſcharge of my duty, according to the beſt of my judgment, and the utmoſt exertion of my ability for his majeſty's honor, and my country's ſervice. I am ſorry that my endeavours*

were not attended with more ſucceſs; and that the armament under my command proved too weak to ſucceed in an expedition of ſuch moment. Truth has prevailed over calumny and falſehood, and juſtice has wiped off the ignominious ſtain of my perſonal want of courage, and the charge of diſaffection. My heart acquits me of theſe crimes; but who can be preſumptuouſly ſure of his own judgment? If my crime is an error of judgment, or differing in my opinion from my judges: and if yet the error of judgement be on their ſide, God forgive them, as I do! and may the diſtreſs of their minds, and uneaſineſs of their conſciences, which, in juſtice to me, they have repreſented, be relieved, and ſubſide, as my reſentment has done. The ſupreme Judge ſees all hearts and motives, and to him I muſt ſubmit the Juſtice of my cauſe. When he had delivered theſe words, he came forward, and reſolved to die with his face uncovered; but, his friends repreſenting that his looks might poſſibly intimidate the ſoldiers, and prevent their taking proper aim, he had his eyes bound with a handkerchief, and kneeling upon the deck, the ſignal was given for the ſoldiers to fire, and he dropped down dead in an inſtant.

How far this unfortunate man was innocent or culpable, cannot be eaſily diſcerned in a miſt of opinions ſupported by the prejudices of faction: if he erred in point of judgment only, it might have been a proper cauſe for his diſmiſſion; but it would have been cruelty to condemn him for it. Thoſe who pleaded with the

greateſt vehemence againſt him, appeared, however, to bring their arguments from the neceſſity there was of making ſome one commander an example, to give greater reſolution to the reſt, and from the good effects that ſeemed to attend his execution, by our repeated ſucceſſes after it. Theſe, however, are ſuch reaſons as may ſilence, but not ſatisfy; and it is to be hoped that no perſon will exultingly triumph in the *end* where the *means* cannot be juſtified.

LETTER LXIV.

EUROPE has often been compared to one republic, obeying one law, namely, that of nations; and compoſed of provinces, each of which is prevented from becoming too great by the univerſal jealouſy of the reſt. A quarrel therefore between any two of theſe is apt to involve the whole in war; but, particularly, if the diſpute happens to ariſe between thoſe who are reckoned the leading powers in this aſſemblage of nations. A war, begun between France and England, for a deſert and tracſleſs wild in the remote parts of America, ſeemed now ſpreading faſt through the whole world; and the appearance of their commotions revived all the ancient jealouſies and claims among the reſt.

The French, at the breaking out of this new war, though they were ſucceſsful in its commencement, were very ſenſible that they could not long hold their acquiſitions againſt ſuch a ſuperiority as the Engliſh were poſſeſſed of at

ſea, and the numberleſs reſources they had of aſſiſting their colonies with all the neceſſaries of war. Being therefore apprized that a naval war muſt, in the end, turn out to their diſadvantage, they made no ſcruple of declaring that they would revenge the injuries they ſuſtained in their colonies, or by ſea, upon the king of England's territories in Germany, which they ſecretly hoped would be a motive to his complying with their demands, or dividing the Engliſh forces, or draining their finances with heavy ſubſidies, as they knew his affection for his native country. In theſe hopes they were not much diſappointed: the court of London immediately, to ſecure the electorate of Hanover, entered into a treaty with the empreſs of Ruſſia, by which a body of fifty-five thouſand men ſhould be ready to act in the Engliſh ſervice, in caſe Hanover ſhould be invaded, for which the Ruſſian empreſs was to receive a hundred thouſand pounds annually, to be paid in advance.

His Pruſſian majeſty had long conſidered himſelf as the guardian of the intereſts of Germany, and was ſtartled at this treaty. The monarch upon the throne was Frederic III, a prince adorned with all the arts of peace, and whom you have ſeen alſo acting as the moſt conſummate general. He had learned to read men, by being himſelf bred in the ſchool of adverſity; and to love his ſubjects, by having experienced their attachment. He therefore took the firſt opportunity to declare, that he would not ſuffer any foreign troops to enter the empire, either as auxiliaries or principals. This

conſummate politician, had, it ſeems, been already apprized of ſome ſecret negotiations between the Auſtrians, whom he looked upon as concealed enemies, and the Ruſſians, for entering his dominions, and ſtripping him of the province of Sileſia, which had been conceded to him in the laſt treaty of peace. His Britannic majeſty, whoſe fears for Hanover guided all his councils, now ſaw himſelf in the very ſituation he moſt dreaded, expoſed to the reſentment of France and Pruſſia, either of which could at once invade and over-run his electorate, while his Ruſſian allies lay at too great a diſtance to aſſiſt him. However, all he wiſhed was to keep the enemy out of Germany; and this the king of Pruſſia made a profeſſion of doing, as well as he. From the ſimilitude of their intentions, therefore, theſe two monarchs were induced to unite their intereſts; and as they both only deſired the ſame thing, they came to an agreement to aſſiſt each other mutually in keeping all foreign forces out of the empire*.

From this alliance both powers hoped great advantages; the preſerving the peace of Germany was the apparent good, but each had other peculiar benefits in view. The king of Pruſſia knew the Auſtrians to be his enemies, and the Ruſſians to be in league with them againſt him; an alliance therefore with the court of London kept back the Ruſſians, whom he dreaded, and gave him hopes of taking an

* *A. D.* 1757.

ample ſatisfaction from Auſtria, whom he ſuſpected. As for France, he counted upon it as a neutral ally, which, from the long and hereditary enmity with the Auſtrians, could not, by declaring againſt him, join them to whom they had ſuch various reaſons for political averſion. The elector of Hanover, on the other hand, had ſtill ſtronger expectations of the benefits that would ariſe from this alliance. He thus procured a near and powerful ally; an ally which he thought the French, in their preſent circumſtances, would not venture to diſoblige: he counted upon the Auſtrians as naturally attached to his intereſts by former ſervices and friendſhip; and the Ruſſians, at leaſt, as likely to continue neuter, from their former ſtipulations and ſubſidy. Such were the motives to this alliance; but both were deceived in every particular. And though this alliance aſtoniſhed Europe at that time, it ſoon produced another connexion ſtill more extraordinary. The Auſtrian queen had long meditated deſigns of recovering Sileſia, which, in her exigency, the king of Pruſſia had invaded, and expected the aſſiſtance of Ruſſia to effect her purpoſes. By this laſt treaty, however, ſhe ſaw England joining with Pruſſia in fruſtrating her hopes; and, deprived of one ally, ſhe ſought about, in order to ſubſtitute another. She therefore applied to France; and, to procure the friendſhip of that power, gave up her barrier in the Netherlands, which England had been for ages acquiring with its blood and treaſure. By this extraordinary revolution, the whole political ſyſtem of Europe aſſumed a

new face, and it pretty clearly ſhows that events guide the politician, while the politician ſeldom guides events; or, to uſe the words of Tacitus, there is but very little difference between the art and its fatality.

In the mean time, this treaty between France and Auſtria was no ſooner ratified than the empreſs of Ruſſia was invited to accede to it; which propoſal ſhe ardently embraced. By concurring with their propoſals, Ruſſia had another opportunity of ſending her forces into the weſtern parts of Europe, which was all ſhe had hoped by the ſubſidiary treaty with England. A ſettlement in the weſtern parts of Europe was what this fierce northern power long wanted an opportunity of obtaining; for, poſſeſſed of that, ſhe could then pour in freſh forces at any time upon the more effeminate and contending ſtates; and, perhaps, at length, obtain univerſal empire. The intrigues of France were alſo ſucceſsfully employed with Sweden. A war between that nation and Pruſſia was kindled up, though contrary to the inclination of their ſovereign, who had the natural motives of kindred for being averſe to that meaſure.

Thus all the alliances which England had long been purchaſing upon the continent, and many of the treaties which ſhe had been long making with all the buſtle of negotiation, were at once deſtroyed. The forces of the contending powers, therefore, now drawn out on each ſide, ſtood thus: England oppoſed France in America and Aſia; France attacked Hanover on the continent of Europe: this country the

king of Pruſſia undertook to protect, while England promiſed to furniſh him with troops and money to aſſiſt his operations. On the other hand, Auſtria had deſigns upon Pruſſia, and drew the elector of Saxony into the ſame purſuits; ſhe was alſo ſeconded in her views by Ruſſia, Sweden, and France, while the reſt of the powers of Europe continued ſpectators of the contention.

Theſe deſigns of Auſtria, for the recovery of her loſt dominions, were too apparent not to be early diſcovered by ſo vigilant a monarch as that of Pruſſia: he ſaw that preparations were making againſt him by that power in Bohemia and Moravia, while the elector of Saxony, under the pretence of a military parade, drew together about ſixteen thouſand men, which occupied the ſtrong fortreſs of Pyrna. The ſecret treaty alſo between the courts of Ruſſia and Auſtria did not eſcape his penetration: by this it was privately ſtipulated, that the treating powers ſhould, in caſe of apprehending any breach of the preſent peace, unite againſt Pruſſia, and ſhare the dominions of that crown between them. This he conſidered as an offenſive alliance: the treating powers alledged, that it was only defenſive. As preparations for war, however, were carrying on with the utmoſt diligence on either ſide, the king of Pruſſia, in order to be confirmed in what he already ſuſpected, ordered his miniſter at Vienna to demand a clear explication, and proper aſſurances concerning the preparations he ſaw making. He at firſt received an equivocal anſwer; but

ordering his miniſter to demand a categorical reply, whether the empreſs-queen was for peace or war, and to require a poſitive aſſurance that ſhe had no intention to attack him that year or the next, an ambiguous anſwer was returned to ſo plain a queſtion, which undoubtedly manifeſted an inclination for war. He therefore thought proper no longer to ſuſpend his operations, but to carry the war into the enemies country, rather than to wait for it in his own. He entered with a large army into Saxony, and, in the uſual ſtrain of civility, demanded from the elector a paſſage through that country, which he well knew the poſſeſſor of it was not able to refuſe. In the mean time, he diſguiſed all his ſuſpicions of the elector's having ſecretly treated with his enemies; and, upon the latter's propoſing to obſerve a ſtrict neutrality, he profeſſed himſelf extremely pleaſed at the offer, but deſired, as a proof of the ſincerity of the elector's intentions, to ſeparate the army of the electorate, for which there could poſſibly be no occaſion in caſe of the neutrality propoſed. This, however, the elector of Saxony thought prudent to refuſe, which was probably what the other eagerly deſired; for, in conſequence of his refuſal, the king formed a kind of blockade about the Saxon camp, in order to reduce it by famine; for ſuch was the ſituation of this ſpot on which the Saxons had encamped, that, though a ſmall army could defend it againſt the moſt numerous forces, yet the ſame difficulty attended leaving it that ſerved to render it inacceſſible to an enemy. Of this his Pruſſian

majeſty took the advantage; and, by blocking up every place of egreſs, cut off their proviſions, and the whole body was obliged to ſurrender priſoners of war.

In a detail of the tranſactions of England, it will not be neceſſary to recapitulate the numerous marches, victories, ſieges, and repulſes, of this great foreign ally. Whatever either former hiſtory had ſhown, or even romance might feign, was outdone both by his expedition and intrepidity. King only of a very ſmall territory, aſſiſted by England, whoſe ſituation was too remote to give any conſiderable ſuccours, oppoſed and ſurrounded by all the moſt formidable powers of Europe, he ſtill oppoſed them on every ſide; he invades Bohemia, defeats the Auſtrian general at Lowoſitz, retreats, begins his ſecond campaign with another victory near Prague, is upon the point of taking that city, but by a temerity inſpired by former ſucceſſes, attacking the Auſtrians at a diſadvantage near Kolin, he is defeated, and obliged to raiſe the ſiege: *Fortune*, ſays he, *has turned her back upon me this day. I ought to have expected it; ſhe is a female, and I am no gallant. Succeſs often occaſions a deſtructive confidence; but another time we will do better.*

One misfortune ſeemed to follow another: the Hanoverians who had joined with him and England in the alliance, had armed in his favor, commanded by the duke of Cumberland. As this army, which conſiſted of three thouſand eight hundred men, was greatly outnumbered by the French, they were obliged continually

to retire before them. The paſſage of the river Weſer might have been diſputed with ſome hopes of ſucceſs; yet the Hanoverians permitted them to paſs it unmoleſted. Their army, therefore, was now driven from one part of the country to another, till, at length, it made a ſtand near a village called Haſtenbeck, where it was judged it would be beſt able to ſuſtain the ſuperiority of the enemy's numbers. However, notwithſtanding all the efforts of diſcipline, and the advantages of ſituation, the weaker ſide was ſtill obliged to retire; and, leaving the field of battle to the French, retreated toward Stade. By taking this route, they marched into a country, from whence they could neither procure proviſions, nor yet had an opportunity of attacking the enemy upon equal terms. Unable, by their ſituation, to retire, or, by their ſtrength, to advance, they were compelled to ſign a capitulation, by which the whole army laid down their arms, and were diſperſed into different quarters of cantonment. By this remarkable treaty, which went by the name of the treaty of Cloſter Seven, the Hanoverians were quite ſubdued, and all the French forces let looſe upon the king of Pruſſia together.

The ſituation of this monarch was now become deſperate; nor could human prudence foreſee how he could extricate himſelf from his diſtreſs. The French forces now united, invaded his dominions on one ſide; the Ruſſians, who, for ſome time, had hovered over his dominions in another part, all at once haſtened onward to overwhelm him, marking their way

with ſlaughter and cruelty. A large body of Auſtrians entered Sileſia, and penetrated as far as Breſlaw, and, turning to Schweidnitz, ſat down before that important fortreſs, which after a long ſiege ſurrendered. Another army of the ſame nation entered Luſatia, made themſelves maſters of Zittaw, and, preſſing forward, laid the capital of Berlin under contribution. Twenty-two thouſand Swedes pierced into Pruſſian Pomerania, took the towns of Anclam and Demmin, and exacted tribute from the whole country. It was in vain that the king of Pruſſia faced about to every invader, though his enemies fled before him: while he purſued one body, another penetrated his territories in the mean time; and his dominions, even in the midſt of victory, were every day contracting. The greateſt part were either taken or laid under contributions, and poſſeſſed by his enemies; and he was left without any alliance or aſſiſtance, but what the Britiſh parliament might think proper to afford.

Theſe ſuccours could, at beſt, have been, for ſome time, but ineffectual; however, it was reſolved by the Engliſh miniſtry, that ſomething ſhould be done, and accordingly an enterpriſe was planned againſt the French coaſt, which, by drawing off their attention from Pruſſia, might give it time to reſpire, and call off a part of the French to defend themſelves. Beſide this intention, England alſo hoped to be able to give a blow to their marine, by deſtroying ſuch ſhips as were laid up or building in the harbour of Rochefort, the city againſt

which this expedition was deſtined. The Engliſh miniſtry kept this object of their operations a profound ſecret; and France was filled with alarms, till at length it was found that the fleet appeared before Rochefort, where it ſpent ſome time in deliberating upon what manner to proceed. At laſt it was reſolved to ſecure the little iſland of Aix, an eaſy conqueſt, which, while performing, the militia of the country had time to aſſemble, and there was an appearance of two camps upon the ſhore. The commanders, therefore, who, by the badneſs of the weather, were, at firſt, prevented from landing, now feared equal danger from the numbers of the enemy which were to oppoſe them. They took into conſideration the badneſs of the coaſt, the danger of landing, the time the city had to prepare for a vigorous defence, and their own unfitneſs for any other methods to reduce it but that of a ſudden attack. This conſideration induced them to deſiſt from further operations; and they unanimouſly reſolved to return home, without making any attempt. Nothing could equal the diſcontent of the Engliſh upon ſeeing this expedition, of which they had conceived ſuch expectations, return unſucceſsful. It produced, as uſual, a conteſt between thoſe who planned, and thoſe who were ſent to execute it. The military men repreſented it as uſeleſs and raſh; the miniſters exclaimed at the timidity and delays of thoſe from whoſe vigor ſucceſs was to be expected. A court of inquiry cenſured the commander; but a court martial acquitted him. This, like almoſt all the former

operations, ſerved to embitter party, and increaſe deſpondence. A great man was even heard to ſay, upon a very ſolemn occaſion, that he believed the commanders of every military operation were reſolved upon doing nothing. The tumult of the people was now ſunk from turbulent clamor into ſullen diſcontent; they ſaw only gloomy proſpects on every ſide, their armies deſtroyed, their fleets inactive, their expeditions ridiculous, and the only ally they had left in Europe, that would fight their battles, upon the point of being overwhelmed by ſuperiority of numbers. Such were the beginnings of this war, from which the timid foreboded national ſervitude, and a total deſtruction of all maritime power, and even the moſt ſanguine only hoped for a peace that might reſtore them to former equality.

LETTER LXV.

SUCH was the ill ſucceſs of the Engliſh arms, and of their allies, at the beginning of this war. Every day the preſs teemed with productions which either reproached their cowardice; or foreboded their undoing. Yet ſtill the hopes of the parliament roſe with their diſappointments, and every reſource ſeemed to augment with their expenſes. Though the ſupplies for this deſtructive and hitherto ſhameful war were enormous, yet they were raiſed as ſoon as granted. The officers of the army ſeemed roufed into vigor by national reproach. Aſia was the country in which ſucceſs firſt began to dawn

upon

upon the Britiſh intereſt, and where we firſt learned the art of again conquering the enemy. A war in Europe could not be proclaimed between the two great powers, without being felt in the remoteſt parts of the globe. This immenſe tract of country, which was the theatre of an Aſiatic war, comprehends the whole peninſula of India Proper. On the coaſts of this great territory, the Engliſh, the French, and ſeveral other powers of Europe, had built forts, with the original conſent of the Mogul, who claims the ſovereignty of the whole empire. Whatever his right may be to this dominion, his power is ſcarce felt or acknowledged in many of the remoter provinces; and even the governors or nabobs, who were originally of his appointment, have rendered themſelves independent, and exert an abſolute dominion over their reſpective territories, without acknowledging his ſuperiority, either by tribute or homage. In their conteſts, therefore, theſe princes, inſtead of having recourſe to the Mogul for redreſs, apply to the European powers, whom they can either purchaſe or perſuade to aſſiſt them. The war between England and France in theſe remote parts, firſt began by each power's ſiding with two contending nabobs, and thus, by degrees, becoming principals in the diſpute. The ſucceſs, on each ſide, for ſome time after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, ſeemed doubtful, till, at length, the affairs of the Engliſh ſeemed to gain the aſcendency by the courage and conduct of Mr. Clive; a gentleman who firſt entered into the ſervice

of the company as a clerk, but ſoon ſhowed his talents more adapted for war. By his vigilance and courage the province of Arcot was cleared of the enemy, the French general taken priſoner, and the nabob, whom the Engliſh ſupported, reinſtated in the government of which he had been formerly deprived. The French, diſcouraged by theſe miſfortunes, and ſenſible of their own inferiority, in this part of the world, ſent over a commiſſary with a view to reſtore peace; and a convention between the two companies was accordingly concluded, importing, that the territories taken on either ſide, ſince the laſt peace, ſhould be mutually reſtored; that the nabobs advanced by the influence of either party, ſhould be acknowledged by both; and that, for the future, neither ſhould interfere in the differences between the princes of the country. The ceſſation, however, was not of long duration; compacts made between trading companies can never be of long continuance, when there is a proſpect of advantage to either ſide from their infraction. In a few months after both ſides renewed their operations, no longer as auxiliaries, but as rivals in arms and commerce. What the motives to this infraction were are not ſufficiently known: wherever there is trade there muſt be a degree of avarice; and that is a paſſion too often the parent of injuſtice and cruelty. Certain it is that the viceroy of Bengal, from motives of perſonal reſentment, declared againſt the Engliſh; and, levying a numerous army, laid ſiege to Calcutta, one of their forts, which was in no ſituation to endure the attack

even of barbarians. It was taken by aſſault; and the garriſon, to the number of one hundred and forty-ſix perſons, were crowded into a narrow priſon called the *Black Hole*, about eighteen feet ſquare, without any entrance for air, except by two iron windows to the weſt, which by no means afforded a ſufficient quantity for the ſupporting life in ſuch numbers. In ſuch a burning climate it is terrible to conceive the ſituation of wretches thus immured and ſuffocating each other. Their firſt effort, upon finding the danger of their horrid confinement, was to break open the door; but this being impoſſible, they endeavoured to excite the compaſſion or the avidity of the guard, by offering him a large ſum of money for his aſſiſtance in removing them to ſeparate priſons, with which he was not able to comply, as the viceroy was aſleep, and no perſon durſt diſturb him. They were now therefore left without hopes of relief to periſh, and the whole priſon was filled with groans, ſhrieks, conteſt, and confuſion. This turbulence ſoon after ſunk into languor and deſpair; and toward morning all was horrid ſilence and deſolation. Of a hundred and forty-ſix who had entered alive, twenty-three only ſurvived, and of theſe ſeveral died of putrid fevers upon their being ſet free.

The reduction of this important fortreſs ſerved to interrupt the proſperous ſucceſſes of the Engliſh company; but the fortune of Mr. Clive ſtill vanquiſhed every obſtacle. A fleet under the command of admiral Watſon, conſpired with his efforts, and helped him in his victories.

Angria, a piratical prince, who had long annoyed the company's ſettlements in the neighbourhood of Bombay, firſt felt the weight of our naval power. This prince maintained a large number of gallies, with which he would attack the largeſt ſhips, when he found a proper opportunity; and, by this means, he exacted a tribute from every European power for a permiſſion to trade. To ſubdue ſuch a dangerous enemy to commerce, admiral Watſon, and colonel Clive ſailed into his harbour of Geriah, though they ſuſtained a warm fire as they paſſed, and ſoon threw all his fleet and his fort into flames. The next day the fort ſurrendered at diſcretion, where the conquerors found a large quantity of warlike ſtores, and effects to the value of one hundred and thirty thouſand pounds.

From this conqueſt Mr. Clive went on to take revenge for the treatment of the Engliſh at Calcutta, and about the beginning of December arrived at Balaſore, in the kingdom of Bengal. There was but ſmall oppoſition made to the fleet, or the army, till they came before Calcutta, the ſcene of former cruelty; but as ſoon as the admiral, with two ſhips, arrived before the town, he received a furious fire from all the batteries. This, however, he returned with ſtill greater execution, and in leſs than two hours the place was abandoned. Thus by the conqueſt of this and the former fortreſs, the Engliſh became poſſeſſed of the two ſtrongeſt ſettlements on the banks of the Ganges. Soon after theſe ſucceſſes, Hughly, a city of great trade, was reduced with as little difficulty,

and all the viceroy of Bengal's ſtorehouſes and granaries deſtroyed. This barbarous prince, incenſed at theſe loſſes, aſſembled an army of ten thouſand horſe and fifteen thouſand foot, fully reſolved to expel the Engliſh out of his dominions. Upon the firſt intelligence of his march, colonel Clive begged of the admiral a reinforcement of men from the ſhips; and ſix hundred ſeamen were accordingly ſoon added to his little army. The numerous forces of the viceroy of Bengal appeared, and colonel Clive advanced in three columns to attack him. But, though the forces were ſo ſeemingly diſproportioned, with reſpect to number, the victory ſoon declared in favor of the Engliſh commander. In fact, what could timid Aſiatic ſoldiers do againſt European troops, hardened by war, and inured to all the viciſſitudes of climate. All the cuſtoms, habits, and opinions, of the Aſiatics, tend to enfeeble the body, and effeminate the mind. When we conceive a body of men led up to the attack, dreſſed in long ſilk garments, with no other courage than that inſpired by opium, with no other fears from defeat but that of changing their mode of ſlavery; their chief commander mounted on an elephant, and conſequently a more conſpicuous object for aim; their artillery drawn by oxen, impatient and furious upon the ſlighteſt wound; every ſoldier utterly unacquainted with that cool intrepidity which provides againſt danger, and only taught to fight by the ſame arts that raiſe their paſſions; — if we conſider all theſe circumſtances, it will be no way ſurpriſing, if

one or two thouſand Europeans ſhould eaſily diſcomfit thirty thouſand Indians. And all the heroiſm of a Cyrus, or an Alexander, in gaining ſuch diſproportioned victories, will no longer be the ſubject of admiration.

A victory ſo eaſily acquired by a foreign enemy, ſoon rendered the viceroy of Bengal contemptible to his ſubjects at home. His preſent cowardice rendered him deſpicable; his former inſolence and cruelty odious. A conſpiracy was projected againſt him by Alikin, his prime miniſter, and the Engliſh, having private intimations of the deſign, reſolved to ſeize the opportunity of ſeconding it with all their endeavours. Accordingly, colonel Clive marched forward, took the town of Cutway in his march, and ſoon came up with the viceroy's army; and, after a ſhort conteſt, put the whole to flight, with terrible ſlaughter. Alikin, who had firſt incited his maſter to this undertaking, had hitherto concealed his attachments, either through fear or perfidy; but, after this victory, he openly eſpouſed the cauſe of the Engliſh, and was therefore ſolemnly proclaimed viceroy of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriſa, in the room of the former viceroy, who was as ſolemnly depoſed, and ſoon after put to death by his ſucceſſor. The new viceroy was not inſenſible of the gratitude he owed the Engliſh, for their aſſiſtance in his promotion. He granted liberally all their demands, ſatisfied them even to the moſt extended wiſh of avarice, and took every method to demonſtrate his pride in their alliance.

Yet not the Indians alone, but the French alſo, ſubmitted to colonel Clive's aſſiduity and

courage, ſeconded by the endeavours of the admirals Watſon and Pocock. Chadenagore, a French ſettlement higher up the river than Calcutta, of great ſtrength, and the moſt important of any poſſeſſed by that nation in the bay of Bengal, ſubmitted to the Engliſh arms. The goods and money found in the place were conſiderable; but the chief damage the French ſuſtained was in the ruin of their head ſettlement on the Ganges, by which they had long divided the commerce of this part of India. Thus, in one campaign, the Engliſh, in ſome meaſure, became poſſeſſors of an immenſe tract of country, ſuperior in wealth, fertility, extent, and number of inhabitants, to many of Europe. Above two millions ſterling were paid to the company and ſufferers at Calcutta; the ſoldiers and ſeamen ſhared ſix hundred thouſand pounds, and the Engliſh forces became too formidable for reſiſtance. Yet, perhaps, this remote power will, one day, either ſerve to drain from the mother country all its uſeful hands, or our victories will ſerve to teach the native barbarians to avail themſelves of their numbers, and, by being frequently defeated, they will, at laſt, learn to conquer.

The ſucceſs of the Engliſh was not a little alarming to the French miniſtry at home; and it is believed that even the Dutch themſelves entertained ſome jealouſy of their growing greatneſs. A conſiderable reinforcement was therefore ſent from France, under the command of general Lally, an Iriſhman, who was reckoned one of the braveſt, yet moſt whimſical men in

the French ſervice. He had been, from his earlieſt years, bred a ſoldier of fortune, and carried the military ſpirit of honor to its utmoſt limits. Under his guidance the French affairs ſeemed, for ſome time, to wear a better face; he took fort St. David's, plundered a town belonging to the king of Tanjour, in alliance with the Engliſh, and after laid ſiege to his capital. Failing in his deſign upon this city, he entered the province of Arcot, and prepared for laying ſiege to Madraſs, the chief ſettlement of our company, upon the coaſt of Coromanded. In the ſiege of this important fortreſs a greater variety of difficulties preſented than he had expected. The artillery of the garriſon was well managed, while, on the other ſide, the French acted with the utmoſt timidity: it was in vain that their commander exhorted them to proceed: though a breach was made, and lay open for fifteen days, no one of them dared to venture to the aſſault. Beſide this, they were ill ſupplied with proviſions, and the arrival of a reinforcement in the garriſon ſoon after, ſerved to baniſh all hopes of ſucceſs. After a briſk fire they raiſed the ſiege; and this miſcarriage ſo entirely depreſſed the ardor of the enemy, that they appeared quite diſpirited in almoſt every enſuing engagement. In this manner, therefore, their affairs went on declining, not leſs by land than by ſea. There were ſeveral engagements between the two fleets, in which the French, though ſuperior in number of ſhips and men, always declined a deciſive engagement.

But the French were not the only enemies the Engliſh had to fear in this part of the world;

the jealouſy of the Dutch was excited by our repeated ſucceſs, and the late extenſion of our power. As this diſpute, however trifling it may ſeem, may, hereafter, be of greater conſequence, I ſhall be more particular in my relation of it.

Under a pretence of reinforcing their garriſons in Bengal, the Dutch equipped an armament of ſeven ſhips, which was ordered to ſail up the Ganges, and render their fort, at a place called Chincura, ſo formidable, as to be able to bid defiance to the power of Britain, and thus ſecure to themſelves the trade for ſaltpetre, which this place afforded. This deſign, however, colonel Clive thought it incumbent on him, if poſſible, to defeat; and ſending the Dutch commander a letter, he informed him that he could not permit his landing, and marching forces to Chincura. To this meſſage the Dutchman replied, that he had no ſuch deſigns as were imputed to him; and he only requeſted liberty to land his troops to refreſh them, which was readily granted. He made theſe conceſſions, however, only till he knew that the ſhips, which were to ſecond his operations, were come up the river, and then, throwing off the maſk, he began his march to Chincura, and took ſeveral ſmall veſſels belonging to the Engliſh, to retaliate for the affront he pretended to have ſuſtained in being denied permiſſion to proceed. Whether, upon this occaſion, the Calcutta Indiaman was ſent out to interrupt their progreſs, or was only purſuing its may homeward, is not clearly known; but certain it is, that the Dutch commander threatened to ſink

it, if it preſumed to paſs him. The Engliſh captain ſeeing them point their guns, as if they really reſolved to put their threats in execution, returned to Calcutta, where two other India ſhips lay at anchor, and reported his adventure to colonel Clive, who inſtantly ordered the three Indiamen to prepare for battle. The Dutch fleet were not remiſs in advancing to meet them. After a few broadſides, however, the Dutch commodore ſtruck, and the reſt of his fleet followed the example. The victory being thus obtained without any loſs to the Engliſh, captain Wilſon, who commanded in the expedition, took poſſeſſion of the prizes, which had greatly ſuffered, and the crews were ſent priſoners to the Engliſh fort. In the mean time their land forces, which amounted to eleven hundred men, were totally defeated by colonel Ford, ſent upon that duty by Clive. A conſiderable part were killed, and the reſt made priſoners of war. During this conteſt, the nabob preſerved a ſuſpicious neutrality, ready, as it ſhould ſeem, to join with the conquerors. Fortune, however, no ſooner determined in favor of the Engliſh, than he offered them his ſervices, and profeſſed himſelf ready to demoliſh the Dutch fortification of Chincura. This conteſt was repreſented in very different lights to the reſpective governments at home; the Dutch declaimed againſt the Engliſh oppreſſing all who attempted to trade in the Indies; while the Engliſh, on the other hand, reminded the Dutch of their former cruelties, and of their deſire of gain, even at the expenſe of every moral obligation.

However, ſoon after, a negotiation enſued; the Dutch wiſely gave way to a power they were unable to withſtand. A treaty was concluded, and peace was reſtored, ſeemingly to the ſatisfaction of both parties. Such was the termination of this conteſt, which probably contains the ſeeds of future diſſenſion. The Dutch will, upon all occaſions, think it allowable to increaſe their power in India to whatever pitch they think proper; and the Engliſh will ever find it their intereſt to repel them. It may thus happen, that the amity of the two powers in Europe will not be ſufficient to preſerve unanimity in ſo diſtant a part of the world. In this manner, while Great Britain puts an end to one war, ſhe often lays the foundation for another; for extended empire ever produces an increaſing neceſſity of defence.

Our ſucceſs againſt the French on the coaſt of Coromandel was not leſs conſpicuous. Our troops were headed by colonel Coote, a native of Ireland, a man of prudence and bravery; he marched againſt general Lally; took the city of Wanderwaſh in his way; reduced Carangoly, a fortreſs commanded by colonel O'Kennedy; and, at length, came up with the French general, who was equally deſirous of the engagement. It is remarkable enough, that the commanders on either ſide were countrymen; but this did not in the leaſt abate their attachment to the different crowns they ſerved. In the morning, early, the French advanced within three quarters of a mile of the Engliſh line, and the cannonading began with great fury on both ſides;

the engagement continued with much obſtinacy till about two in the afternoon, when the French gave way and fled toward their camp; which, however, they as quickly abandoned, and left their cannon and the field of battle to the conquerors. Their loſing the city of Arcot was the conſequence of this victory; and nothing now remained to them, of all their vaſt poſſeſſions in India, but Pondicherry, their ſtrongeſt, largeſt, and moſt beautiful ſettlement. This capital of the French Indian power, in the days of its proſperity, exceeded all other European ſettlements there, in trade, opulence, and ſplendor; and was ſtill the repoſitory of all the French wealth which remained after repeated defeats. As ſoon as the fortreſſes adjacent to this important place were reduced, colonel Coote ſat down before it, reſolved upon the blockade by land, while admiral Stevens ſhut up their harbour by ſea. A regular ſiege was, at that time, impracticable, from the periodical rains which in that climate were ſoon expected to obſtruct ſuch operations. Theſe diſadvantages were even ſufficient to repreſs any attempts whatſoever; but, notwithſtanding the inclemency of the climate, the Engliſh commander continued before the place for full ſeven months. Neither rains nor ſtorms were in the leaſt able to abate their aſſiduity; they continued the ſiege, and preſſed the garriſon in ſuch a manner, that they were reduced to the moſt extreme diſtreſs. Lally, however, was reſolutely bent on ſuffering every calamity, rather than yield this laſt ſtake of French power in India; though his

ſoldiers were obliged to feed on dogs and cats, and even bought ſuch wretched proviſions extremely dear (eight crowns having been given for the fleſh of a dog) yet ſtill he determined to hold out. In the midſt of this diſtreſs, fortune ſeemed to give an opportunity of relief, had it been properly ſeconded. In the beginning of January, one of thoſe terrible ſtorms which are common in thoſe climates, but of whoſe violence we can have but little idea in Europe, wrecked a large part of the Engliſh fleet that was blocking up the harbour of Pondicherry. This was a blow which once more elevated the hopes of the deſpairing garriſon. The governor now flattered himſelf with the hope of being ſupplied with proviſions; and once more animated his ſoldiers, long ſunk by diſeaſe, famine, fatigue, and uninterrupted adverſity. He immediately wrote to one of the French reſidents at a Dutch ſettlement for inſtant aſſiſtance; his eager impatience appears in the letter he ſent. *The Engliſh ſquadron is no more, Sir. Of the twelve ſhips they had in our road, ſeven are loſt, crews and all; the other four diſmaſted, and no more than one frigate has eſcaped — loſe not an inſtant in ſending boats after boats loaded with rice. — The ſaving of Pondicherry has been in your power once already; this opportunity neglected, the fault will be all yours. Offer great rewards. — In four days I expect ſeventeen thouſand Marattas. — In ſhort, riſk all, attempt all, force all, and ſend us ſome rice, ſhould it be but half a garſe at a time.* This

ſingular letter, however, was intercepted; and, in leſs than four days, he had the mortification to behold admiral Stevens again appearing in the harbour, who had repaired his loſſes with all poſſible celerity; and the blockade now became as complete as ever. Still, however, he made no propoſal to ſurrender, while the ſiege was carried on by his countryman with redoubled alacrity; and, at length, he found his troops half conſumed with fatigue and famine, a breach made in the rampart, and not more than one day's proviſion of any kind remaining. He was now reduced to an extremity that would admit of no beſitation; a ſignal was therefore made to ceaſe hoſtilities: the principal of the jeſuits, together with two civilians, came out, and offered terms of capitulation. Lally, however, could not be prevailed upon to offer any terms: he ſent a paper, filled with reproaches againſt the Engliſh, to colonel Coote; and alledged, that he would not treat with an enemy upon the honorable terms of war, who had already forfeited his honor in ſeveral inſtances. He therefore ſuffered the Engliſh troops to take poſſeſſion of the place, but refuſed to ſurrender it in the uſual forms. This conqueſt terminated the power of France in India; the whole trade of that vaſt peninſula, from the Indus to the Ganges, became our own. The princes of the country knew the Engliſh force, and learned to fear it. Since that time nothing conſiderable has been done againſt us. Our Eaſt India company have become the arbiters of empire. The Mogul himſelf has been defeated and taken

priſoner. The Britiſh empire begins to vie even with that of ancient Rome; the extent of its dominions on land is as wide, and its force at ſea is infinitely greater. Happy if we know when to bound our ſucceſſes; happy if we can diſtinguiſh between victories and advantages; if we can be convinced, that when a nation ſhines brighteſt with conqueſt, it may then, like a waſting taper, be only haſtening to decay!

LETTER LXVI.

VICTORY, which thus firſt dawned upon us from the eaſt, ſeemed to extend even to Europe and America. But ſome ſteps led to theſe ſucceſſes which had been long wiſhed for; and, at length were effected. The affairs of war were directed by a miniſtry which ſeemed utterly unequal to the weight and importance of ſuch a charge; they were but feebly held together among each other, and clamored againſt by the united voice of the people. It had long been their method to rule by party; and, ſurrounding the throne, it was ſaid, they attempted only to fill the royal ear with whatever ſuggeſtions they thought moſt to their intereſts. When any new meaſure was propoſed, which could not receive their approbation; or any new member was introduced into government, whom they did not nominate: it was their method to throw up their places with a ſecret view of reſuming them with greater luſtre. Thus all hope of preferment was to be expected only from them; public favors were

conferred only for private ſervices; they were thought to govern in the ſenate and in the field: the ſtrength of the crown was actually declining; that of the people was ſcarce any more; while ariſtocracy filled up every avenue to the throne with pride, ignorance, and faction.

The ſtate of the king and nation, at that time, was truly deplorable: the defeat of Braddock in America; the loſs of Oſwego; the delay of armaments; the abſurd deſtination of fleets and armies, all ſerved to reduce the people almoſt to a ſtate of deſperation, and brought addreſſes to the king from every part of the kingdom. The general voice was, at length, too loud not to reach the throne; and the miniſtry were, at length, obliged to admit ſome men into a ſhare of the government, whoſe talents and integrity might, in ſome meaſure, counterbalance their own deficiency. At the head of theſe newly introduced were Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge; the former of theſe was appointed ſecretary of ſtate, the other chancellor of the exchequer. The people had high expectations from their abilities, and, in the end, they were not diſappointed.

The pleaſure of the nation, however, was but of ſhort continuance: a miniſtry compoſed of ſuch jarring principles could not long continue united, being conſtituted of perſons eſpouſing different meaſures, and actuated by different motives. The old junto courted the ſovereign's favor by their pretended attachment to his foreign dominions; the new clamored againſt all continental connexions, as utterly incompatible with

with the intereſt of the nation. Both, perhaps, might have been wrong; but it is obvious that theſe ſentiments were ſufficient to ſink the latter in the royal eſteem; and this diſlike was artfully kept up, and increaſed by their old rivals in power. A few months, therefore, after Mr. Pitt had been put into office *, he was obliged to reſign the ſeals by his majeſty's command; and Mr. Legge was diſmiſſed from being chancellor of the exchequer. The old miniſtry now thought themſelves ſecure in the unmoleſted poſſeſſion of former power; but this very ſtep which they took for their own ſecurity, turned out to them as unfortunate as thoſe they planned for the public were unſucceſsful. The whole nation ſeemed to riſe up as one man in vindication of that part of the miniſtry that was lately excluded; and the king, at length, thought proper to comply with the general ſolicitation. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Legge were again reſtored, and a train of ſucceſſes ſoon began to dignify their deſigns.

For ſome time, however, the meaſures planned by the former miniſtry were purſued in America; and though the Engliſh were ſuperior to the enemy, yet ſtill they felt all the inconvenience of irreſolute councils and ill-planned operations. Our women and children in that part of the world were expoſed to the unparalleled cruelty of the Indian ſavages; and, what is ſtill more remarkable, two thouſand Britons, with arms in their hands, continued tame

* *A. D.* 1758.

ſpectators of theſe inhumanities. Bad ſucceſs ever produces complaint on all ſides; and England now heard nothing but invective and accuſation. The generals ſent over to manage the operations of war, loudly accuſed the timidity and the ſlowneſs of the natives, who were to unite in their own defence; the natives, on the contrary, as warmly expoſtulated againſt the pride, avarice, or incapacity, of thoſe ſent over to command them. General Shirley, who was appointed to that command, had been ſuperſeded by lord Loudon; and this nobleman ſoon after returning to England, three ſeveral commanders were put at the head of ſeparate operations: the moſt important, being that deſigned againſt cape Breton, was commanded by general Amherſt. The taking poſſeſſion of this iſland, and its fortreſs, was a conqueſt greatly wiſhed by all our colonies, as it had always been a convenient harbour to the enemy, which from thence annoyed our trade with impunity. It was alſo a convenient ſituation for carrying on their fiſhery; a branch of commerce of the utmoſt benefit to the French nation. The fortreſs of Lewiſburg was ſtrengthened with all the aſſiſtance of art; the garriſon was numerous; the commander vigilant; and every precaution taken to prevent a deſcent. An account of the operations of a ſiege is tedious; be it ſufficient to ſay, that the Engliſh ſurmounted every obſtacle with the moſt amazing intrepidity; their former timidity ſeemed now converted into perſevering reſolution: the place was ſurrendered by capitulation; and our troops, long uſed to diſappointment and repulſe, began to boaſt of victory in their turn.

Two other operations were carried on in America at the ſame time, the one under general Abercrombie, againſt Crown Point and Ticonderago; the other, more to the ſouthward, againſt Fort du Queſne. The latter expedition was ſucceſsful; but that againſt Crown Point and Ticonderago was attended with the cuſtomary bad fortune. This was now the ſecond time that the Engliſh army had attempted to penetrate into thoſe hideous wilds, by which nature had ſecured the French encroachments in that remote part of America. Braddock fell in the attempt: his raſhneſs contributed to his defeat; and too much caution, perhaps, was the fault of his ſucceſſor. Much time was ſpent in marching to the place of action; and the enemy were thus perfectly prepared to give the Engliſh troops a warm reception. They were found intrenched under the fort of Ticonderago, behind a breaſtwork raiſed eight feet high, and ſtill farther ſecured by felling trees, with their branches pointing outward. Theſe difficulties, however, the Engliſh attempted to ſurmount; but as the enemy, being ſecure themſelves, took aim at leiſure, a terrible carnage of the aſſailants enſued, and the general, after repeated efforts, was obliged to order a retreat. The Engliſh army, however, was ſtill ſuperior to that of the enemy, and might, it was ſuppoſed, have gone onward with ſucceſs, if ſupported by their artillery, which had not yet arrived; but the general felt, too ſenſibly, the terrors of the late defeat, to remain in the vicinity of a victorious enemy: he therefore reimbarked

his troops, and returned to his camp at Lake George, from whence he had taken his departure.

The ſucceſs of this campaign, however, was, upon the whole, greatly in favor of the Engliſh. The taking of Fort du Queſne ſerved to remove from our colonies the terror of the incurſions of the barbarians, and interrupted that continued correſpondence, which, by a chain of forts, one part of the French ſettlements had with the other. The miniſtry too diſcovered a ſpirit of vigorous reſolution hitherto unknown in this part of the world; and the next campaign promiſed more brilliant ſucceſſes.

Accordingly, in the opening of the next ſeſſion*, the miniſtry ſeemed ſenſible, that a ſingle effort, carried in ſuch wide extended dominions, would never bring the enemy into ſubjection; it was therefore reſolved to attack them in ſeveral different parts of this extenſive empire at once. Preparations were accordingly made, and expeditions went forward againſt three different parts of the northern continent of America. General Amherſt, commander in chief, with a body of twelve thouſand men, was to attack Crown Point, that had hitherto been the reproach of the Engliſh army; general Wolfe was, at the oppoſite quarter, to enter the river St. Lawrence, and undertake the ſiege of Quebec, the capital of the French dominions in this part of the world; while general Prideaux and Sir William Johnſon were to attempt a fort near the cataract of Niagara. This

* *A. D.* 1759.

laſt expedition was the firſt that was ſucceſsful. The fort of Niagara was a place of great importance, and ſerved to command all the communication between the northern and weſtern French ſettlements. The ſiege was ſoon commenced by the Engliſh, but general Prideaux was killed in the trenches by the burſting of a cohorn; ſo that the whole ſucceſs of the expedition fell to general Johnſon, and his good fortune. He omitted nothing to promote the vigorous meaſures of his predeceſſor, but added all his own popularity. The French knew the importance of this fort, and attempted to relieve it. Johnſon attacked them with his uſual intrepidity and ſucceſs; in leſs than an hour their whole army was put to the rout, and the garriſon, beholding the defeat of their countrymen, ſurrendered priſoners of war. Nor was general Amherſt leſs ſucceſsful, though without meeting an enemy; in his march to Crown Point, he found both that fort and Ticonderago deſerted and deſtroyed. There now, therefore, remained but one grand and deciſive blow to put all North America in poſſeſſion of the Engliſh. This was the taking of Quebec, a city handſomely built, populous, and flouriſhing. Admiral Saunders commanded the naval part of the expedition; that by land was committed to the conduct of general Wolfe. This young ſoldier, who was not yet thirty-five, had diſtinguiſhed himſelf on many former occaſions, particularly in the ſiege of Lewiſburg, a part of the ſucceſs of which was juſtly aſcribed to him, who, without being indebted to family or

connexions, had raiſed himſelf by merit to his preſent command. The war in this part of the world had hitherto been carried on with extreme barbarity. Wolfe, however, diſdained theſe baſe proceedings, and carried on all the terrors of war with the humanity of a truly civilized European. A deſcription of the ſiege of this city may inſtruct a ſoldier, but can ſcarcely inform a citizen; be it ſufficient to obſerve, that its beginning appeared extremely unpromiſing to the beſiegers, and repeated repulſes even ſerved to abate the hopes of the commander. *I know*, ſaid he, *that the affairs of Great Britain require the moſt vigorous meaſures; but then the courage of a handful of brave men ſhould be exerted only where there is ſome hope of a favorable event. At preſent the difficulties are ſo various that I am at a loſs how to determine.* However, he reſolved, though now ſinking under fatigue and ſickneſs, to make one vigorous attempt before he gave up all; and accordingly, in the night, part of his troops made themſelves maſters of a hill that commanded the town. A battle enſued: Montcalm, the French commander, reſolved not to ſurvive the defeat of his country; Wolfe, on the other ſide, reſolved to conquer or die. Both commanders had their wiſh; both fell; but the Engliſh were victorious. The circumſtances attending the death of Wolfe, ſerved to give an example like that of the noble Theban. He, in the beginning of the engagement, received a wound in the hand, which he diſſembled, wrapping it round with his handkerchief to ſtop

the effuſion of blood; he advanced with unconcern: a ſecond ball was more fatal; it pierced his breaſt, ſo that, unable to proceed, he leaned on the ſhoulder of a ſoldier who was near him. Now, ſtruggling in the agonies of death, and juſt departing, he heard a voice cry, *They run;* he ſeemed to revive a moment at the ſound, and aſking who ran, was informed the *French:* expreſſing his wonder that they ran ſo ſoon, and unable to gaze any longer, he ſunk on the ſoldier's breaſt, and his laſt words were, *I die happy.* Perhaps the loſs of ſuch a man was greater to the nation than the conquering of all Canada was advantageous; but it is the misfortune of humanity, that we can never know true greatneſs till that moment when we are going to loſe it.

The ſurrender of the city was the conſequence of this victory, and, with it, the total ceſſion of all Canada. The French, it is true, made in the enſuing ſeaſon a vigorous effort to retake it; but, by the good conduct of our governor, the town held out till relieved by an Engliſh fleet, under the command of lord Colville. Thus did this campaign make ample reparation for all the loſſes that had been hitherto ſuſtained by the Engliſh. The French had now no force capable of making any reſiſtance; they held out the war now, not with hopes of victory, but honorable capitulation. One place after another was invaded: Montreal, at laſt, ſurrendered; and, in a ſhort time, a country, which their own writers have repreſented as being more extenſive than the Roman empire, fell totally under the power of his Britannic majeſty.

How far the extending dominion tends to the increaſing the ſtrength of a nation, is an object worthy conſideration. The ſplendor of victory ſhould never dazzle the eye of reaſon. No people ever could call their country powerful, if it were not populous: for political force depends upon the ſmall frontier to be defended, and the vicinity of an army to every place to be invaded; but extended empire takes away both theſe advantages, and, before the ſoldier can traverſe half his proper territories, his country may have already felt all the horrors of invaſion. Whatever joy therefore our country might have felt at theſe immenſe acquiſitions of remote territory, I own it gives me no very pleaſing proſpect. The manufactures, the trade, and the riches of theſe diſtant countries, can never recompenſe for the continual drain of uſeful and induſtrious ſubjects, that muſt be derived from the mother country to people them. Wherever the lower ſort of people in any kingdom can fly from labor, they will be ready to go; yet, upon the induſtry and valor of theſe alone, every kingdom muſt hope for ſecurity. Not the effeminate and the luxurious can defend their country in the day of battle; they may increaſe timidity by their example, but opulence can never give true relief. The Spaniards and the Portugueſe were much more powerful before they divided their ſtrength into all the torrid climates of Southern America. The ſtate thus got rich, but loſt men; they had gold, but could not regain induſtry. Thus are their nations now incapable of defending themſelves

againſt powerful foreign invaſion. The immenſe wealth of the Indies, that every year comes home to their ports, goes to enrich a few; their ſubjects are either in the extreme of wealth or poverty: the rich have only ſlaves beneath them, who hate thoſe for whom they muſt labor; the poor have no acquiſitions nor property to defend; ſo that their armies are compoſed either of wretches preſſed into the ſervice, who only ſeek for opportunities not to fight, but to fly; or of men, rich and noble, courageous from pride, yet weak from luxury. Such is not, as yet, the caſe of England, nor will ever be, if a paſſion for conqueſt is not miſtaken for national proſperity.

LETTER LXIII.

THE ſucceſs of our arms in America was achieved by moderate efforts; on the contrary, in Europe, the efforts that were made, and the operations of our great ally the king of Pruſſia, were aſtoniſhing, yet produced no very ſignal effects. Safety was all that could be expected; and this was ſecured contrary to all human expectation. You have juſt ſeen that monarch ſurrounded by enemies, the greateſt and moſt formidable powers of Europe; you have ſeen almoſt the whole power of the continent united againſt, and hovering over his devoted dominions; and the only allies that remained to him bound by treaty to retire, and give him no aſſiſtance. In this terrible ſituation he ſtill adhered to his fortitude, and, relying on his

natural ſubjects alone, reſolved never to abandon his claims. Such was the deſperate condition of his affairs; yet they were ſtill rendered more hopeleſs, when he was informed, that his only friend, the monarch of that generous people which had hitherto ſupplied him with money and ſtores, was going to forſake him, and leave him to irremediable ruin. It was thus he expoſtulated with the doubting monarch upon this occaſion: *Is it poſſible that your majeſty can have ſo little fortitude and conſtancy, as to be diſpirited by a ſmall reverſe of fortune? Are our affairs ſo ruinous that they cannot be repaired? Conſider the ſtep you have made me undertake, and remember you are the cauſe of all my misfortunes. I ſhould never have abandoned my former alliances but for your flattering aſſurances. I do not now repent of the treaty concluded between us; but I entreat you will not inglorioufly leave me at the mercy of my enemies, after having brought upon me all the power of Europe.* The French and Imperialiſts, after a ſucceſsful ſummer campaign, were at this time, which was the depth of winter, ſet down to the ſiege of Leipſic. His Pruſſian majeſty dreaded the capture of this important city, and ſoon, unexpectedly, ſeemed to riſe up before it. Such was the terror of his arms, even vanquiſhed as he had been, that his approach raiſed the ſiege, and the French, though ſuperior in number, retreated. He at length overtook them at a village called Roſbach, and gained ſo complete a victory, that night alone ſaved their whole army from deſtruction.

The Auſtrians were, in another part of the empire, ſtill victorious, and had taken the prince of Bevern, his generaliſſimo, priſoner. The king, after a dreadful march of two hundred miles, in the depth of winter, came up with them near Breſlaw, diſpoſed his inferior forces with his uſual judgment, and obtained another bloody victory, in which he took no leſs than fifteen thouſand priſoners. Breſlaw, with a garriſon of ten thouſand men, ſurrendered ſoon after. Theſe ſucceſſes diſpirited the enemy, and raiſed his allies to new hopes.

After the capitulation of Cloſter-Seven was ſigned, between the duke of Cumberland and the duke of Richelieu, both ſides began to complain of infractions. The Hanoverians accuſed the rapacity of the French general, and the inſolent brutality of his ſoldiers; while the French retorted the charge of inſurrection againſt them, and began to think of treating as a conquered enemy thoſe whom they had only bound by treaty as neutrals. Treaties have never been preſerved longer than intereſt or compulſion bound them; political faith is a word without meaning; the French oppreſſed the Hanoverians; the latter reſumed their arms; and each ſide complained, as uſual, of infraction. A general was not long wanting to aſſemble the collecting army. Prince Ferdinand of Brunſwic put himſelf at their head, began by ſkirmiſhing with ſucceſs; and, at laſt, they were in a capacity of becoming formidable to their late victors. From this time the king of Pruſſia fought the enemy upon more equal terms than

ever; often victorious, ſometimes repulſed; but ever active and formidable. To name his victories, the towns he took, the dangers he eſcaped, and the loſſes he ſuffered, would take up more time than I ſhould chuſe to grant to ſuch accounts, or you ſhould beſtow. Never was the art of war carried to ſuch a pitch as by him. In this war, Europe ſaw, with aſtoniſhment, campaigns carried on in the midſt of winter; great and bloody battles fought, yet producing no viſible advantage to the victors. At no time ſince the days of heroiſm were ſuch numbers deſtroyed, ſo many towns taken, ſo many ſkirmiſhes fought, ſuch ſtratagems practiſed, or ſuch intrepidity ſhown. Armies now were conſidered as compoſing one ſingle machine, directed by the general, and animated with one will. From the commentary of theſe campaigns, ſucceeding generals will take their leſſons for devaſtation, and improve in the arts of increaſing human calamity.

England was, all this time, happily retired from the calamities which drenched the reſt of Europe in blood; yet from her natural military eagerneſs, ſhe ſeemed deſirous of ſharing thoſe dangers of which ſhe was only a ſpectator. This paſſion for carrying on a continental war, was not leſs pleaſing to the monarch from his native attachments, than to the people from their natural propenſity to arms. As ſoon as it was known that prince Ferdinand had put himſelf at the head of the Hanoverian army, his Britannic majeſty, in a ſpeech at the opening of the ſeſſion of parliament, obſerved that the late

ſucceſſes in Germany had given a happy turn to his affairs, which it would be neceſſary to improve. The commons therefore granted liberal ſupplies both for the ſervice of the king of Pruſſia, and for enabling the army formed in the electorate of Hanover to act vigorouſly in conjunction with him. Soon after it was conſidered, that men would be a more grateful ſupply than money. The miniſter, who had firſt come into power and popularity by oppoſing ſuch meaſures, was now prevailed upon to enter into them with even greater ardor than any of his predeceſſors. The hopes of putting a ſpeedy end to the war by vigorous meaſures, his connexions, and, perhaps, the pleaſure he found in giving his majeſty pleaſure, incited him eagerly into a continental war. It is certain no miniſter could more powerfully ſecond a warlike monarch's intentions. That ſpirit of enterpriſe which had, in a meaſure, taken birth with his adminiſtration, began to overpower all obſtacles. The paſſion for military honor ſeemed diffuſed through all ranks of people; and it only wanted a channel in which to flow. In order to indulge this general inclination, the duke of Marlborough was ſent into Germany with a ſmall body of Britiſh forces to aſſiſt prince Ferdinand, where they behaved with bravery, and conſpired in promoting that prince's ſucceſſes. Each victory they gained, however, only ſerved as a pretext to call over new forces from Britain, while the Engliſh miniſtry were taught to believe that every laſt battle would be deciſive. The battle of Crevelt was fought, in

which the Hanoverians and Engliſh had the advantage; but it produced no effect. The victory of Minden followed; but laurels ſeemed all that England reaped from the conquered field. After theſe two victories it was ſuppoſed, that one reinforcement of Britiſh troops would terminate the war in our favor; a reinforcement was therefore ſent. The Britiſh army in Germany, now amounted to above thirty thouſand men, yet no advantage of any conſequence was the reſult of this formidable aſſiſtance. War was the trade of ſome generals, and it muſt be allowed a gainful trade it was. Let me therefore again paſs over this continued repetition of marchings, ſkirmiſhes, and rencounters, nor load the page with names of German generals, too difficult to be pronounced by an Engliſh tongue, and equally grating to a patriot ear. The victories of either ſide might, in fact, be conſidered as a compact by which ſomething was to be loſt on either ſide, and no advantage to be acquired. The Engliſh, at length, began to open their eyes to their own intereſt; nor could all the ſplendors of victory ſo far blind them, as not to ſee that they were waging unequal war, and aſſuming new loads of taxes for conqueſts they could neither preſerve nor enjoy. Such were the growing diſcontents of the people, when the king, who had inſpired theſe meaſures, unexpectedly died.

On the twenty-fifth of October, 1760, George II, without any previous diſorder, was found by his domeſtic ſervants expiring in his chamber. He had ariſen at his uſual hour, and

obſerved to his attendants, that, as the weather was fine, he would walk out. In a few minutes after this, being left alone, he was heard to fall down upon the floor. The noiſe of his fall brought his attendants into the room, who lifted him into bed, where he deſired, in a faint voice, that the princeſs Amelia might be ſent for; but before her arrival, he expired, in the 77th year of his age; and in the 33d of his reign, in the midſt of victory; and at that very period, when the univerſal enthuſiaſm of conqueſt began to ſubſide into more ſober reflections. If any monarch was happy in the peculiar mode and time of his death, it was he. The factions which had been nurſing in his reign, had not yet come to maturity; and all their virulence threatened to fall upon his ſucceſſor. He was himſelf of no ſhining abilities; and, conſequently, while he was ſuffered to guide his German dominions, he intruſted the care of Britain to his miniſters at home. However, as we ſtand too near this monarch to view his real character without partiality, take the following characters of him, by two writers of oppoſite ſentiments.

"As to the extent of his underſtanding," (ſays one) "or the ſplendor of his virtue, we "rather wiſh for opportunities of praiſing, than "undertake the taſk ourſelves. His public "character was marked with a predilection for "his native country, to which he ſacrificed "all other motives."

On the other hand, ſays his panegyriſt, "On "whatever ſide we look upon his character, "we ſhall find ample matter for juſt and

" unſuſpected praiſe. None of his predeceſſors " on the throne of England lived to ſo great " an age, or enjoyed longer felicity. His ſub- " jects were ſtill improving under him in com- " merce and arts; and his own economy ſet a " prudent example to the nation, which, how- " ever, they did not follow. He was, in his " temper, ſudden and violent; but this, " though it influenced his behaviour, made no " change in his conduct, which was generally " guided by reaſon. He was plain and direct " in his intentions, true to his word, ſteady in " his favor and protection to his ſervants; not " parting even with his miniſters till compelled " to it by the violence of faction. In ſhort, " through the whole of life, he appeared rather " to live for the cultivation of uſeful virtues " than ſplendid ones; and, ſatisfied with being " good, left others their unenvied greatneſs."

LETTER LXIV.

WHATEVER the advantages or diſadvantages of the laſt reign may have been, George III had the happineſs to aſcend the throne, when the former were predominant, when the nation, if tired of war, which from the preſent ſyſtem of finance had become expenſive, were at leaſt fluſhed with victory, and when they were, from many circumſtances, prepared to greet the young king with the moſt cordial reception, and to flatter him with the moſt exalted opinion. It is to be remarked, nor is there any thing invidious in the remark, that on ſuch occaſions,

men

men act more from feeling than judgment, and argue more from hope than experience. The expectations raiſed on the acceſſion of his majeſty, were, however, not altogether without foundation. He had juſt reached his twenty-third year; his paſt life was unſullied by public licentiouſneſs; his manners were decent, and his moral character irreproachable. To this was added, that he was born in the kingdom, and "gloried in the name of Briton;" the adherents to the Stuart family were few and nerveleſs; the Hanoverian family was eſtabliſhed beyond all poſſibility of ſucceſsful oppoſition, and nothing remained but to purſue thoſe plans which gave ſplendor to the war, and by dint of ſuperiority obtain from the enemy conditions of peace equally honorable and advantageous to the nation. His majeſty, accordingly, profeſſed his reſolution to proſecute the war with vigor, and retained the miniſtry who had hitherto conducted it, excepting lord Holderneſs (who gave place to John, earl of Bute) and Mr. Legge, chancellor of the exchequer. But the latter of theſe removals was attributed to political intrigue, and it is certain that the elevation of the earl of Bute was viewed with jealouſy by the adherents to the Whig ſyſtem. Bute had many virtues, yet it was conceived, that his ſentiments were leſs favorable to the intereſts of liberty than could have been wiſhed in one who had had the ſuperintendence of his prince's education. It is equally certain that, from this moment, ſuſpicions aroſe in the minds of thinking men, which appeared to be in ſome

meaſure confirmed by the ſubſequent events of this reign.

His majeſty's union with the princeſs Charlotte of Mecklenburg Strelitz was celebrated *, together with their coronation, with every demonſtration of joy and ſatisfaction throughout the kingdom. While theſe domeſtic events occupied the minds of the people, Mr. Pitt purſued the war with unabated vigor. Belleiſle in Europe, and Pondicherry in the Eaſt Indies, were added to our conqueſts, and the capture of Dominica in the Weſt Indies, reduced the French power to the loweſt degree. The nation, however, became leſs dazzled by the ſplendor of victory; the expenſes of the war were enormous; Germany was a perpetual drain to our finances, and the neceſſity of a ſpeedy termination to hoſtilities was beginning to be felt, when a negotiation was opened between France and Great Britain; but ſo far was this from being ſucceſsful, that the war promiſed a longer duration, and a greater extent. Spain, deeply meditating the *Family Compact*, betrayed her deſigns by what was conſidered as an impertinent interference between the belligerent powers, and neceſſarily rouſed Mr. Pitt; who ſeeing at once the whole of the project, propoſed to declare war againſt that kingdom. In this he was oppoſed by the cabinet council, but was ſo confident of the rectitude and expediency of the meaſure, that he reſigned in conſequence of its failure.

* *A. D.* 1761.

The popularity of Mr. Pitt at this time, notwithſtanding a ſeeming inconſiſtency in his ſupport of continental connexions, was at its height: and while the people, of whom he had long been the idol, were regretting his loſs in the tumultuous language of popular affection, he ſhook the opinions of the nation by accepting a penſion for himſelf, and a peerage for his lady. The repreſentations of his friends to the public endeavoured, however, to ſupport his popularity; and when, ſoon after his reſignation, their majeſties, according to cuſtom, dined at Guildhall with the lord mayor and citizens, Mr. Pitt, on his entrance into the city, was received by the populace with ſuch acclamations, as ſeemed to derogate not a little from the reſpect due to their ſovereign, who happened to be an eyewitneſs of the veneration with which his late miniſter was treated.

Our opinion of him, indeed, as a ſhrewd politician, takes ſtrength from the laſt act of his adminiſtration. What he foreſaw, almoſt immediately took place. The family compact was announced. England was neceſſarily drawn into a war with Spain, and Portugal, as the friend of England, was involved almoſt to deſtruction. The influence of Mr. Pitt's former plans continued. Martinico ſurrendered to our arms, and Spain, in a very few months, loſt the Havanna, Manilla, and all the Philippine iſlands. The inhabitants of Manilla ſaved their lives and property by engaging to pay a ranſom of one million, but the Spaniſh government had not the honeſty to pay the ſum, nor our adminiſtration the ſpirit to enforce it.

While theſe ſucceſſes gave courage to the new miniſter, the duke of Newcaſtle, and the remainder of thoſe who compoſed the cabinet of George II, reſigned: the earl of Bute was placed at the helm, and a change of inferior departments took place to a degree ſo extenſive as to border upon inhumanity. On the other hand, Mr. Henry Fox was invited to manage the buſineſs, as it is termed, of the houſe of commons. The neceſſity of corruption in carrying the meaſures of government into execution began at this time to be underſtood. Without remarking on a principle which is falſe in all reſpects, I proceed to ſtate that the adminiſtration was now complete, the enemies of Great Britain were humbled, and the paths to peace clearly marked out. A negotiation was accordingly once more begun between the belligerent powers, by the intervention of the king of Sardinia's ambaſſador; the duke of Bedford was ſent over to Paris, and the duke de Nivernois came to London; and at length the definitive treaty of peace was ſigned at Paris, by the duke of Bedford, the duke de Praſlin, and the marquis de Grimaldi *. The French gave up all Canada; their right to the neutral iſlands; the fort of Senegal; and their privilege of fiſhing on the coaſts of Newfoundland, and the gulph of St. Lawrence, but at a certain diſtance from the ſhore. Spain, alſo, gave up on her part the extenſive country of Florida. Theſe were great advantages, but they did not

* *Feb.* 10, 1763.

afford univerſal ſatisfaction; the parliament, indeed, had ſanctioned the treaty by a great majority, but the adherents to the ex-miniſtry, who were neither few in number, nor inconſiderable in talents, reprobated the peace as inglorious, and its advantages as deluſory. You may read what has been advanced on both ſides, and you will find that one of the moſt urgent motives a man can have for thinking for himſelf, is the knowledge that much of what he reads comes from the pens of hirelings. One objection to the peace is however upon record. The regulations reſpecting our North American conqueſts were ſo imperfectly expreſſed as to occaſion a war of horrid bloodſhed with the Indian nations, which was not concluded until the ſubſequent year. The governments inſtituted in the Weſt India iſlands and America, were the Grenades, Quebec, and Eaſt and Weſt Florida. Such was the termination of a war, by which Great Britain acquired the higheſt renown as a warlike nation, but by which ſhe accumulated immenſe expenſe, and gained territory which diminiſhed her ſecurity by dividing her ſtrength, and at the ſame time contributed to leſſen none of the animoſities which rival nations employ for the purpoſe of mutual deſtruction.

The concluſion of the war was followed by the downfal of the miniſter. The eſtabliſhment of the peace is ſaid to have been the object of his ambition, and, that attained, his hopes of public uſefulneſs were at an end. The talents of lord Bute were undoubtedly ſuch as would

decorate an aſcetic life. In a life of literary leiſure, he acquired dignity, and conciliated reſpect, but his manners were not adapted to a public ſituation. Not wholly averſe to corruption, he knew not how to qualify it, and with intentions often honeſt and honorable, he knew not how to recommend them. His wiſdom as a ſtateſman was doubted, and his principles were certainly adverſe to popular rights. The firſt obnoxious act of his adminiſtration was a tax upon cider, to be collected in the way of exciſe. Over that mode of taxation the people had always preſerved a watchful eye. It was not forgotten that Walpole, in the plenitude of power, was defeated in a ſimilar attempt, and although the cider bill, paſſed into a law, the clamor againſt it was ſo great, as to compel the ſucceeding adminiſtration to repeal it. The people, as I hinted before, diſliked lord Bute, and their diſlike had now what it wanted before, a juſt foundation. It is probable, however, that this exciſe bill like others of more conſequence ſince, might, have remained in force, and the adminiſtration remained whole, had not an individual ſtarted forth, as the people's champion, who by his reiterated complaints of error and miſconduct in the adminiſtration of public affairs, created a diſſatisfaction in the public mind, which the miniſter was neither able nor willing to withſtand. This individual was Mr. John Wilkes, a man of moderate talents, but of great perſeverance, and who poſſeſſed all the confidence, and cunning neceſſary to a public leader. What

his character wanted in virtue, was ſupplied by the plauſibility of his pen. Diſappointed in his application for the governorſhip of Canada, he commenced a periodical paper called the *North Briton*, a ſeries of invectives againſt the miniſtry, and of obloquy againſt the Scotch nation. His coadjutor was Mr. Charles Churchill, the vigor of whoſe genius cannot but be acknowledged. The proſe of the one and the poetry of the other kindled the flame of party. The miniſter yielded, and was ſucceeded by Mr. George Grenville, who began his adminiſtration by proſecuting Mr. Wilkes. This writer, in one of his papers, had aſſerted that his majeſty's ſpeech contained a falſhood. The king's meſſenger, by virtue of a general warrant, entered Mr. Wilkes' houſe, and apprehended him. After being examined before the ſecretaries of ſtate, he was committed to the Tower. His papers were likewiſe ſeized and ſealed up, though in the preſence of his friends, an indulgence not uſually granted to perſons apprehended in this manner. A few days after, he was brought to Weſtminſter Hall by Habeas Corpus, and releaſed by lord chief juſtice Pratt, in conſequence of his being a member of parliament. An information was then filed againſt him in the court of king's-bench, for being the author of the 45th number of the North Briton. No means were now left unpractiſed to ſwell the popular tumults. Mr. Wilkes called himſelf the champion of liberty; his friends echoed the title, and the people believed him. It muſt be obſerved, however, that the oppoſition, although not diſpleaſed

with any ſtep that heightened the miniſterial ſcale, allowed him to fight his own battles, and the addreſs of the corporation of London, preſented at this time, declared their abhorrence of the riſing ſpirit of faction. The parliament ordered the ſeditious paper to be burnt by the common hangman, an operation that occaſioned a riot, which was not in itſelf dangerous, but ſerved to diſcover the ſpirit of the populace. Mr. Wilkes was afterward expelled from the houſe of commons, and found it prudent to retire to the continent. The violence and intemperance of party never appeared in a light ſo diſgraceful as at this period; but however contemptible the origin of the tumult, the effects were favorable to public liberty. General warrants loſt their ſuppoſed legality, and the ſeizure of papers in conſequence of ſuch warrants was no longer to be practiſed. I may remark on the whole proceedings againſt Mr. Wilkes, that an eager deſire to reſtrain the freedom of political diſcuſſion argues weakneſs. If the libeller advanced a falſhood, it might have been refuted to his ſhame by a declaration of the fact. The ſteps taken to puniſh him only ſerved to crown the ſucceſs of his ſcheme. He wanted to be popular, and to gain by his popularity. What neither his wit, his argument, nor his language could have done, the unconſtitutional ſeizure of his papers did for him; he wiſhed to be the idol of the populace, and his enemies built the altar. It muſt be obſerved too, that his cauſe, when it emerged into the queſtion of general warrants, became the cauſe

of the nation at large, of many who deſpiſed him, as well as of the populace, whoſe ignorance was deluded by his plauſibility. It remains to be mentioned, that when he proſecuted the ſecretary of ſtate for ſeizing his papers, he obtained a verdict of damages. It was on this memorable occaſion that chief juſtice Pratt, after pronouncing the warrant under which Mr. Wilkes was ſeized, illegal, concluded his ſpeech with theſe words: "If the higher juriſdictions ſhould declare my opinion erroneous, I ſubmit, as will become me, and kiſs the rod; but I muſt ſay I ſhall always conſider it as a rod of iron for the chaſtiſement of the people of Great Britain." An appeal ſo ſolemn was not without its effect. Juſtice Pratt ſhared in the popularity of the times, and his attachment to the liberty of the ſubject was remembered to his honor, long after the intereſted flatterers of the people had completely deceived them, and the miſt of popular deluſion was no more.

LETTER LXV.

THE adminiſtration of Mr. Grenville, a man neither ignorant nor indolent, was in all reſpects unfortunate. His knowledge in trade and finances, which his friends very highly extolled, was guided by miſrepreſentation, and perplexed with errors. Forgetting the relative dignity of ſituation, he made the naval officers act in the mean capacity of revenue officers, a poſt which, if it had not been degrading, they were not qualified to fill, and in a ſhort time their

precipitancy almoſt ruined the trade carried on between our American colonies and the Spaniſh plantations. Our colonies loſt the ſpecie which enabled them to make the deſired remittances to the mother country. The trade, likewiſe, between thoſe colonies and the Weſt India iſlands began to decline from a ſimilar cauſe. They ſoon felt their diſtreſs, and, as the humbleſt and moſt moderate expedient, determined to remedy, by a ſtrict œconomy and domeſtic forbearance, thoſe evils which the loſs of trade was beginning to accumulate. The Britiſh miniſtry were not inſenſible that they had gone too far, and enacted a law which ſeemed to legalize the trade between the American and other European colonies; but in fact, ſuch was the prevailing impolicy, that it enjoined duties which almoſt amounted to a prohibition, and which, when paid, were to be paid in ſpecie, for paper bills were not to be offered in payment. This was unwiſe in a very great degree, but the climax of miniſterial impolicy was to be wound up by the famous ſtamp act; an act, which though afterward repealed, excited the diſcuſſion of a queſtion in which the right of the Britiſh parliament to tax the American colonies was involved. That right was then * firſt denied, and afterward given up by its moſt ſtrenuous advocates, as not to be defended on juſt principles of free government. But it was unfortunate to hazard it. The Americans were more than affected in their commerce by the

* *A. D.* 1765.

ſubſequent repeal of the ſtamp act. The act itſelf was raſh, and inflamed their paſſions; the repeal of it was a ſymptom of weakneſs, and ſhook their loyalty and obedience. In the chain of cauſes which ſeparated the colonies from the mother country, this muſt be conſidered as the firſt link.

The miniſtry were at this time confiding in their ſecurity, when ſome actions proceeding from this exceſs of confidence haſtened their downfal. In the arrangement of a regency bill, to provide for the king's illneſs, they ſhowed a marked diſreſpect toward the princeſs dowager of Wales, his majeſty's mother, by excluding her highneſs from any ſhare in the regency. They diſmiſſed the earl of Bute's brother from the office of keeper of the privy ſeal in Scotland, without being able to aſſign any reaſon. Theſe were actions which could conciliate neither the court nor the people. The odium alſo which they had contracted by their unwiſe reſtraints on American commerce was revived by an inſurrection of the journeymen ſilk weavers to prevent the importation of French ſilks. During popular adminiſtrations, inſurrections are not heard of.

A change of miniſtry was planned and executed under the auſpices of the duke of Cumberland, and the marquis of Rockingham appeared at the head of an adminiſtration compoſed of men of moderate whig principles. It was during their ſhort ſtay in power that the ſtamp and cider acts were repealed, and by their other meaſures reſpecting colonial commerce,

and their alleviating the burdens of the people at home, tranquillity ſeemed to be reſtored to every part of the Britiſh dominions. They had, however, no ſooner made theſe ſalutary proviſions, than their adminiſtration ceaſed. The duke of Grafton was appointed firſt lord of the treaſury, and Mr. Pitt, now created earl of Chatham, accepted the office of lord privy ſeal. Their aſſociates in office were the earl of Shelburne, lord Camden, and Mr. Charles Townſend. You have already ſeen that the parties denominated whig and tory were now mixed, and popular opinion became conſequently divided.

The diſtreſſes of the poor, owing to a ſcarcity of corn, obliged the privy council to lay an embargo on that article, a proceeding which, however juſtified by neceſſity, was ſo conducted as to require an act of indemnity. An act was accordingly paſſed on the meeting of parliament, but it provided only for the indemnity of the perſons who carried the proclamation into effect. The privy council, as if authorized by the conſtitution to iſſue ſuch proclamations, were omitted in the act. This brought on a ſpirited debate, in the courſe of which the miniſtry juſtified themſelves by the neceſſity of providing for the public good in extraordinary emergencies, by extraordinary means, an argument which may often ſilence, but can ſeldom ſatisfy. Scarcely had they got over this difficulty, when the impolitic ſyſtem of taxing the colonies was again revived by Mr. Charles Townſend. He introduced a bill for impoſing a duty on tea, paper,

painter's colors, and glaſs imported into America. This paſſed with little or no oppoſition at home. Its conſequences were unhappily not foreſeen. It muſt be alſo mentioned that in this and other financial acts, lord Chatham bore no part. He was at this time prevented by illneſs from executing any of the duties of his office, and when on the demiſe of Mr, Charles Townſend, lord North ſucceeded in his place, the earl was convinced that his influence on public tranſactions was at an end, and he reſigned. Previous to his reſignation, intelligence arrived of the effects of Mr. Townſend's new ſtamp act. America preſented a ſcene of tumultuous diſcontent, and though tranquillity was apparently reſtored at Boſton by an armed force, it was not of long duration. In the Eaſt Indies, a war had broke out between the Engliſh and Hyder Ali, which was carried on with various ſucceſs. The Iriſh obtained an act by which the parliament of that country, formerly determinable at the king's deceaſe, was appointed to be choſen once in eight years. Other events of leſſer moment occurred in this year, but the public attention now became engroſſed by the re-appearance of Mr. Wilkes.

This gentleman, who had incurred a ſentence of outlawry, returned to England juſt before the general election *, and with a ſpirit untamed by ſufferings, and uncramped by the weight of authority, offered himſelf to repreſent the city of London. The livery, however, were not

* *A. D.* 1768.

prepared to accept his ſervices, and his enemies were rejoicing in his defeat, when, to their ſurpriſe, he carried his election for the county of Middleſex, againſt the influence of great landed property, and the whole ſtrength of government. His ſucceſs was the ſignal for riot and every ſpecies of tumult. A mob aſſembled round the king's bench priſon (to which Mr. Wilkes was ſentenced for two years) and the riot act being read in vain, the military fired upon the people, ſeveral of whom were killed and wounded. This ſerved only to increaſe the popular rage, and weaken the influence of adminiſtration. When on the death of Mr. Cooke, the other member for Middleſex, Mr. ſerjeant Glynn offered himſelf, as on the popular ſide, he carried his election againſt the whole intereſt of the court. At this election a riot took place, in which ſome of the populace were killed; the murderers, though tried and convicted, found means to eſcape. Theſe repeated acts of weakneſs on the part of adminiſtration, and of fury on that of the people, engaged the attention of the nation in an extraordinary degree. The preſs teemed with the mutual recriminations of the parties.

Wilkes had not yet taken his ſeat, when he publiſhed a letter, that fell into his hands, from lord Weymouth to the chairman of the Surry quarter ſeſſions. This he choſe to conſider as the cauſe of the murders committed in St. George's fields. A charge, that ſo nearly affected the noble lord's character, was not likely to paſs without notice. Mr. Wilkes was adjudged

guilty of a breach of privilege, and expelled the houſe. The Middleſex electors again choſe him, but the houſe of commons declared this election void, and made out a new writ. To prevent his walking over the courſe, if poſſible, a Mr. Luttrell, already a member of parliament, vacated his ſeat, and ſtood candidate for Middleſex. This gentleman, although he had not a fourth part of the votes which Mr. Wilkes had, and was not returned by the ſheriffs, was, in ſpite of all this, declared duly elected. It was argued that Mr. Wilkes, having been once expelled, could not again be elected, and as a vote for a man not eligible is not a legal vote, it followed that Mr. Luttrell had the majority of legal votes. The freeholders of Middleſex petitioned againſt a deciſion which they deemed equally unconſtitional and incomprehenſible; but the houſe voted that, according to the law of parliament, a reſolution once paſſed could not be reverſed in the ſame ſeſſions.

Theſe proceedings were conſidered as ſo generally intereſting to the nation as to draw their attention from affairs that afterward appeared to be equally important. The parliament engaged in warm debates on the policy of taxing America, but the queſtion remained undecided. The people in that country had become ſo refractory, that in an addreſs the king was requeſted to iſſue a ſpecial commiſſion for trying the American delinquents in England. This did not paſs without a vehement but unſucceſsful oppoſition on conſtitutional grounds.

We are now approaching to a period remarkable for the events to which it gave birth. This was the acceſſion of lord North to the office of firſt lord of the treaſury*. It was during this adminiſtration that Great Britain experienced a convulſion which ſhook it to its centre, and has ſince extended its effects to other nations in a manner that ſtrongly evinces the inſufficiency of human wiſdom and foreſight.

The Middleſex election ſtill engaged the public mind. The people were rouſed, and the throne was beſieged by innumerable addreſſes and remonſtrances. The rights of electors and elections, the right of the people to ſpeak, and the duty of the ſovereign to hear, were canvaſſed with unuſual boldneſs. The complaints againſt the late unconſtitutional ſtretches of miniſterial power were loud and inceſſant. Compared to the numbers who ſigned theſe remonſtrances, and the alacrity with which their names were procured, the courtly flattery of counter-addreſſes was conſtrained, tardy, feeble, and inſignificant. In parliament, the eloquence of Chatham and Camden enforced, but in vain, a reverſal of the proceedings on the Middleſex election. Lord Chatham declared, that the people had no confidence in the then parliament, and propoſed to addreſs his majeſty, praying him to diſſolve it. I have already adverted to the freedom with which the conduct of the miniſtry was diſcuſſed, but I am now to

* *A. D.* 1770.

to relate an incident of that kind that is wholly unprecedented.

The corporation of London had preſented a ſecond addreſs and remonſtrance to his majeſty, not having procured a favorable anſwer to the former one. On this occaſion his majeſty returned for anſwer, That he ſhould have been wanting to the public, as well as to himſelf, if he had not expreſſed his diſſatisfaction at the laſt addreſs. The lord mayor, Mr. Beckford, a man of blunt manners and independent ſpirit, aſtoniſhed the court, by deſiring leave to reply. This being, however, granted, his lordſhip declared how much the bare apprehenſion of his majeſty's diſpleaſure would, at all times, affect their minds; that the declaration of his diſpleaſure had filled them with anxiety, and with the deepeſt affliction, and he entreated the king not to diſmiſs them from his preſence without ſome comfort, and proſpect at leaſt of redreſs. Thus far Mr. Beckford followed the etiquette of petitioning, but he concluded his ſpeech in theſe words: "That whoever had already dared, or ſhould hereafter endeavour, by falſe inſinuations and ſuggeſtions, to alienate his majeſty's affection from his loyal ſubjects in general, and from the city of London in particular, and to withdraw his confidence and regard from his people, was an enemy to his majeſty's perſon and family, a violator of the public peace, and a betrayer of our happy conſtitution, as it was eſtabliſhed at the glorious and neceſſary revolution." That this aſſertion was equally juſt, and equally unwelcome,

cannot be doubted. Mr. Beckford's ſpeech was ſpeedily circulated over the kingdom, aſtoniſhed all, and convinced the majority.

During this year, a part of Mr. Townſend's ſtamp act was repealed; but that which regarded the tea was continued. The repeal therefore was unſatisfactory to the friends of the colonies, becauſe the principle of the act remained. Mr. Grenville was ſucceſsful in carrying a bill through the houſes, for regulating the proceedings of the houſe of commons on controverted elections. This was not very agreeable to the miniſtry, and was ſtrenuouſly oppoſed by the firſt lord of the treaſury. At this time the Iriſh parliament vindicated their independence, by rejecting a money bill, which, agreeably to ancient cuſtom, had been always framed in the Engliſh privy council. This occaſioned an unuſual ferment, but the commons perſevered, and in time eſtabliſhed their right to originate money bills in their own houſe.

In the courſe of the ſummer, the Spaniards ſent out ſome ſhips and ſeized upon Falkland Iſlands, where the Engliſh had lately made a ſettlement and erected a fort, and this violation of peace had nearly involved us in a war with that nation. A negotiation, however, took place, and the Spaniards reſtored the iſlands. It was privately ſtipulated that thoſe iſlands ſhould be afterward evacuated by Great Britain, and ſince that time no ſettlement has been made upon them. The pens of the political writers were employed to magnify or diminiſh the conſequence of theſe iſlands, according as they

were engaged for or againſt the miniſtry. Junius, a popular and elegant writer, whoſe real name has never yet been diſcovered, was at this time a formidable opponent to adminiſtration, and Dr. Samuel Johnſon, whoſe moral and critical writings are above all praiſe, ranged himſelf on their ſide. On the whole, if the affront offered to the nation be overlooked, it does not appear that the poſſeſſion of theſe iſlands was worth contending for. The miniſtry, whoſe private agreement to cede the iſlands was not at this time known, took credit for their firmneſs, and it muſt be confeſſed that in this inſtance at leaſt their firmneſs did not degenerate to obſtinacy.

The following year * is chiefly diſtinguiſhed by an event of conſiderable importance to the nation, by extending the liberty of the preſs. Before this period it was underſtood that the publication of the debates of parliament was contrary to the privileges of the houſe, and what little the printers of newſpapers ventured to give, was diſguiſed by fictitious names, or merely the initials of the ſpeakers. The power of the houſe, however, to prohibit ſuch publications, was undefined, and the papers about this time were encroaching, they knew not upon what; when at length, a member of the houſe of commons complained that his ſpeech had been miſrepreſented, and as ſuch tended to injure him in the opinion of his conſtituents. The houſe took up his cauſe with more warmth

* *A. D.* 1771.

than prudence. There are periods when it is particularly dangerous to aſſert undefined authority, and this was one of them. They ordered the printers to attend the houſe; the printers, conceiving that a law which did not exiſt, could not be obeyed, refuſed to attend. The ſerjeant at arms was then ordered to take them into cuſtody, but he was treated with deſigned contempt. Irritated at this, the houſe addreſſed his majeſty, that he would iſſue his proclamation, and offer a reward for apprehending thoſe men. In conſequence of this, they were apprehended, but immediately diſcharged by the magiſtrates, one of them by Mr. Wilkes (now an alderman of the city of London) a ſecond by alderman Oliver, and a third by Mr. Croſby, the lord mayor. The magiſtrates were applauded by the populace, and publicly thanked by the citizens in common council. The houſe of commons had, however, proceeded too far to retract, and Mr. Oliver and the lord mayor, both members of parliament, were ordered to attend in their places, where they juſtified their act with ſo much boldneſs, as to provoke the houſe to ſend them to the Tower, in which they remained until the end of the ſeſſion. They were brought up, indeed, by habeas corpus to the court of common pleas, and their caſe argued, but in vain.

The houſe were ſtill more perplexed with Mr. Wilkes. He had been ordered to attend at the bar of the houſe, but, in return, he claimed his privilege as a member, refuſing to obey the orders of the houſe in any other

character. It was now the houſe diſcovered that they had involved themſelves in a dilemma, from which there were no means of eſcaping with credit, and they accordingly hit upon one of thoſe littleneſſes which make the beſt cauſes ridiculous. They ordered Mr. Wilkes to appear on the 8th of April, and adjourned to the ninth. This was giving up the cauſe in the moſt ungraceful manner; and they were ſo fully convinced that the privilege above-mentioned was untenable, that they have never ſince moleſted the newſpapers on the ſcore of debates. Theſe are now given openly, and at full length, of names and circumſtances; and the perſons employed in this ſervice have from long habit acquired a facility and accuracy which is wonderful, eſpecially as they are not yet permitted to call in the aid of ſhort-hand. Some celebrated orators have, indeed, cauſe to regret that the houſe could not command ſecrecy, as the parliamentary reports have ſerved to record their many inconſiſtencies, and deviations from principle. What they have loſt, however, the public have gained: conſtitutional information is more widely diffuſed, and the people have now a check upon their repreſentatives, which they had not before, or had imperfectly.

LETTER. LXVI.

THE exerciſe of reaſon and judgment in matters reſpecting religion, has always been conſidered, by many able writers, as an

eſſential part of that freedom which our conſtitution holds forth. At ſeveral periods ſince the revolution, this privilege has been aſſerted by dint of the ſtrongeſt argument. It has nevertheleſs been, on the other hand, maintained, that the exiſtence of a religious eſtabliſhment requires that all its members, and others, who wiſh to enjoy the advantages pertaining to it, ſhould ſubſcribe a certain formula, by which their belief in the articles of its faith and worſhip may be aſcertained. The whole body of proteſtant diſſenters have ever rejected ſubſcription to the articles of the church of England, and have, at various times, endeavoured to procure an exemption from it, as a bar to their advancement in civil offices, or in the naval and military ſervice. Nor are theſe articles more acceptable to many members of the eſtabliſhed church, who conceive that there are ſome things in them not conſonant to the ſcriptures, and that no proteſtant, as a qualification, ſhould be required to make any other declaration, than that the holy ſcriptures are the rule of his faith and practice. When a reformed liturgy was ſhown to archbiſhop Herring, he ſaid, "I approve the temper and wiſdom of it. But into what times are we fallen, after ſo much light, and ſo much appearance of moderation, that one can only wiſh for the ſucceſs of truth. The world will not bear it."

Encouraged, probably, by ſentiments like theſe, a numerous body of the eſtabliſhed clergy, with ſeveral members of the profeſſions of law

and phyſic, joined in a petition to parliament * for relief in the matter of ſubſcription. A ſpirited debate accompanied this petition. The impolicy of confining or aggrieving men's conſciences, and tempting them to prevarication and hypocriſy, was forcibly urged. On the other hand, the opponents of the petition declared themſelves ſwayed by the dread of future innovations (ſhould the preſent petition be anſwered) of the prevalence of heretical opinions, and of his majeſty's incapacity, from his coronation oath, to alter the church government. During the debate on this petition, which was rejected by a great majority, ſome hints were thrown out reſpecting the diſſenting miniſters, which gave that body of men reaſon to hope that their caſe was conſidered as widely different from that of the petitioners of the eſtabliſhment, and that the time was now come when their diſabilities were to be taken off. They accordingly applied to the houſe by petition, praying to be relieved from ſubſcribing to the articles of a church to which they did not belong. The ſucceſs of their petition ſhowed that they had not miſunderſtood the temper of the houſe of commons. The bill for relief was carried by a great majority, but in the houſe of lords, after a long debate, it was rejected. The church of England was repreſented as being endangered by ſuch a departure from the laws which guarded its privileges; and it was argued that religion ought never to be left naked to the hereſy and immoralities which a

* *A. D.* 1772.

degenerate age might introduce. Various circumſtances have ſince contributed to ſupport this watchfulneſs over the diſcipline and articles of the church. Yet the Machiavels of the time are of opinion, that the church does not act with true policy in this matter. Many, indeed, of the more moderate diſſenters think that toleration, inſtead of increaſing their numbers, would gradually mix them in the general maſs, while the penal laws now hanging over their heads are a principal cauſe of their being more firmly united as a religious body. It is conceived likewiſe, that they become leſs attached to a government ſurrounded by a fence, that ſerves to keep out only men of integrity and principle; for to thoſe of another deſcription, the articles can never be a ſtumbling block.

The "Royal Marriage Act," introduced into parliament about this time, was occaſioned by the marriage of his majeſty's two brothers, the dukes of Cumberland and Glouceſter, to ladies of inferior rank. It was deemed expedient to ſupply the defects of the exiſting laws, and, by ſome new regulations, prevent the deſcendants of the late king (excepting the iſſue of princeſſes who have married, or may hereafter marry, into foreign families) from marrying without the conſent of his majeſty, his heirs and ſucceſſors. A bill was accordingly carried through both houſes, declaring all marriages, without ſuch conſent, to be null and void. This bill was, however, violently reſiſted in every ſtage of its progreſs, and, in the houſe of lords, two ſtrong proteſts were

entered againſt it. It was thought to lay an improper reſtraint upon marriage, and to add too much additional weight to the royal prerogative.

During this year an expedition had been made againſt the iſland of St. Vincent, one of our Caribbean iſlands in the Weſt Indies. This expedition was canvaſſed in parliament, and condemned as unjuſt, cruel, and impolitic, becauſe it wantonly expoſed our beſt troops to deſtruction. The motion for a ſtricter inquiry, however, was thrown out, and the Caribbees having entered into a treaty with our forces, the affair was allowed to drop, although not without ſevere imputations on the conduct of our planters; a race of men into whoſe moral ſyſtem humanity hath not entered largely.

The affairs of the Eaſt India company occupied much of the attention of parliament during this and the following year. But it would ſwell this ſketch far beyond the preſcribed limits, were I to enter, even at moderate length, on the complicated ſtatements preſented to the houſe on this occaſion. The affairs of the company were evidently embarraſſed, and it became neceſſary they ſhould be brought under the immediate inſpection of the crown. The new regulating bill conſiſted of theſe articles: that the court of directors ſhould, in future, be elected for four years; ſix members annually; but none to hold their ſeats longer than four years; that no perſon ſhould vote at the election of the directors, who had not poſſeſſed their ſtock twelve months: that

the ſtock of qualification ſhould, inſtead of 500l. be 1000 l.; that the mayor's court of Calcutta ſhould, for the future, be confined to ſmall mercantile cauſes, to which only its juriſdiction extended before the territorial acquiſition; that in lieu of this court, thus taken away, a new one be eſtabliſhed, conſiſting of a chief juſtice, and three puiſne judges; that theſe judges be appointed by the crown; and that a ſuperiority be given to the preſidency of Bengal over the other preſidencies in India.

All theſe clauſes paſſed with great majorities, and thus a total change was effected in the conſtitution of the company in England, and the adminiſtration of its preſidencies in India. At this time alſo, the conduct of lord Clive was ſeverely cenſured, but his ſervices were conſidered as paramount to every defect in his government; the nature of the evidence againſt him was objected to; and it was voted, that he had rendered great and meritorious ſervices to his country.

You have ſeen, that the events of the laſt ſix or ſeven years have been few, and comparatively of ſmall importance to the hiſtoric page. But we are now approaching a ſcene that will open gradually to a revolution of infinite moment; a revolution, to which the gentle name of miſunderſtanding has been applied, as if it had ariſen from a trifle which words could explain, or etiquette rectify. A variety of domeſtic events have hitherto given, ſometimes, not an unpleaſant intereſt to the detail of this reign; but in what follows, the train of impolicy

is impetuous and uninterrupted, and the chain of miſchief is unbroken.

You may remember that, when the other taxes which gave offence to the growing independent ſpirit of America, were taken off, that on tea, though a trifling one, remained. Nor was this the only cauſe of diſaffection: the dependence of the governors and judges in America had been transferred from the people to the crown; and by ſome conſidential letters which accidentally fell into the hands of the people of Maſſachuſett's Bay, they diſcovered that a ſcheme of coercion was in agitation againſt them. Accordingly, when the tea was attempted to be landed, the mob aroſe in Boſton harbour, boarded the ſhips, and threw their cargoes into the ſea, retiring peaceably afterward without offering or receiving any perſonal violence. This circumſtance alone ought to have indicated that this was no common mob, no banditti of plunderers, ſeeking their own intereſt only. Other places followed the example, particularly in South Carolina. Such reſiſtance to the mother country could not long be concealed; it reached the miniſtry, heightened by many aggravations. The miniſter exhibited to parliament *, whoſe advice was thought immediately neceſſary, a number of papers received from America, all proving that the ſpirit of ſedition was not confined to one or two places, but extended over all the colonies. The houſe reſolved to exert every means in

* *A. D.* 1774.

their power, of effectually providing for objects ſo important to the general welfare, as maintaining the due execution of the laws, and ſecuring the juſt dependence of the colonies upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain. It was propoſed that the town of Boſton ſhould be obliged to pay for the cargoes of tea which the populace had deſtroyed; and that in order to compel payment, it ſhould be deprived of its privileges as a port, until its good behaviour could be aſcertained. This was oppoſed by a petition from the agent for the council of Maſſachuſett's Bay, who deſired to be heard in favor of that council, and of the town of Boſton, and by another from the lord mayor, in the name of the natives and inhabitants of North America, then reſiding in London. They conſidered the reſolutions of the houſe as oppreſſive and unjuſt, and concluded with the emphatic words, that "the attachment of America could not ſurvive the juſtice of Britain." The minority in both houſes alſo ſtrongly contended againſt the violence of the meaſures about to be adopted, and warned the miniſter that the flame would ſoon increaſe, and become too violent for any future attempts to quench it. It was even propoſed to repeal the duty upon tea; but the miniſtry were bent upon their own meaſures, and the reſolutions were carried through both houſes without a diviſion.

This emboldened them to take another ſtep, yet more reſolute. A bill was brought in to regulate the government of Maſſachuſett's Bay, by transferring the whole executive power to

perſons appointed by the crown. This occaſioned warm debates, and a ſtrong proteſt. More petitions appeared againſt it, but were rejected. It was urged, that ſuch meaſures would only exaſperate, becauſe founded in injuſtice; and that no inſtance of general diſcontent among a people or nation ever aroſe from any other cauſe than a general ſenſe of oppreſſion. Theſe arguments were unavailing, and, as an appendix to this and the former bill, it was enacted, that rioters, apprehended in the province of Maſſachuſett's Bay, if it ſhould appear that a fair trial could not be had in the province, might be tried in ſome other of the colonies, or in Great Britain. The miniſter informed the houſe at the ſame time, that four regiments under the command of general Gage had been ordered to Boſton. It is plain from this laſt act, that, whatever flattering hopes the miniſter entertained of returning peace, he was proceeding againſt the colonies as in a ſtate of actual rebellion. You may eaſily perceive that this was, in fact, a humiliating confeſſion of the weakneſs and inefficacy of all proceedings hitherto adopted. The interpoſition of parliament was undoubtedly neceſſary, but neceſſary as a deliberate council, not as a council of war to enforce meaſures by arms. It muſt be added, that, however impolitic this conduct now appears, the opinion of the nation at large went with lord North. They foreſaw not the evil day that was coming on. It was expected, and even inſiſted upon, that the meaſures adopted *muſt* be ſucceſsful; the colonies *muſt* ſubmit,

and peace be reſtored in a few weeks. Much of theſe falſe hopes may be attributed to miſrepreſentation. The malecontents in America were repreſented to be a mob, and not the people, to be the few whom it is eaſy to terrify, and not the many, whom no force can conquer.

Before entering on the conſequences of theſe meaſures, I ſhall juſt advert to a bill paſſed near the cloſe of this ſeſſion, to aſcertain the limits of the province of Quebec in North America, to form a legiſlative council for all its affairs (except taxation) to be appointed by and during the pleaſure of the crown: the Canadian Roman catholics to be entitled to a place in it; to eſtabliſh the French laws, and a trial by jury in civil caſes; and to ſecure to the popiſh ſecular clergy the legal enjoyment of their eſtates, and of their tithes, from all who were of their own religion. This bill met with great oppoſition both within doors and without. It was conſidered as not merely tolerating popery, but making it an eſtabliſhed religion. The other regulations were objected to, becauſe they went to form a ſyſtem of arbitrary government, and it muſt be confeſſed that in theſe arrangements the model of the Britiſh conſtitution was wholly overlooked.

LETTER LXVII.

WHEN general Gage arrived at his deſtination *, he entered on his commiſſion with an apparent confidence in the ſucceſs of the meaſures which he was inſtructed to purſue. But

* *May* 1774.

the flame of civil diſcord had taken height before his arrival; the coloniſts were already in poſſeſſion of the Boſton port-bill, which juſtified their fears, and at the ſame time excited their courage. And while ſome indulged the hopes of reconcilement, the majority prepared for a ſeparation from the mother country. Numerous meetings of the inhabitants of Boſton invited the other colonies to concur with them in a reſolution, that all trade with Great Britain, Ireland, and the Weſt Indies, ſhould ceaſe, until the parliament reverſed their proceedings. The obnoxious port-bill was circulated over the colonies, as the beſt excuſe for the ſteps they were about to take, and the reſentment which it excited ſoon became general.

Soon after his arrival, the governor informed the new aſſembly, that it was neceſſary they ſhould remove to the town of Salem on the 1ſt of June, purſuant to act of parliament; but the aſſembly ſeeming inclined to remonſtrate, he adjourned it to the 7th of that month. He increaſed their diſſatisfaction ſtill farther by rejecting a petition, that a day of faſting and prayer ſhould be appointed. Such days were common in America, on extraordinary occaſions, and are a relict, perhaps among the beſt, of the practice of the puritanical times.

Other places had by this time followed the example of Boſton. The houſe of burgeſſes in Virginia took upon them to appoint a faſt on the 1ſt of June, the day on which the fatal bill, for ſuch I may now call it, was to take effect. This provoked their governors to diſſolve the

aſſembly, a meaſure uſeleſs and impotent, as the principal members iſſued propoſals for a *general congreſs* to meet, and declare the voice of the whole colonies. The coloniſts, however, cannot be accuſed of raſhneſs. Many of them, while they commiſerated the diſtreſſes of the Boſtonians, recommended the moſt lenient meaſures. while preparing for the worſt, they uſed no other weapons at this time than remonſtrance and petition. It may be alſo ſuppoſed that, amid a variety of contending intereſts, the propoſal, to interrupt all trade with Great Britain, would not be ſubſcribed by thoſe who immediately depended on it. Great Britain, by ſuch a ſtep, might indeed loſe much, but the coloniſts would infallibly loſe every thing. The obſtruction of one channel of profit cannot be ſpeedily ſucceeded by the opening of another. Beſides, they conſidered, that the adoption of ſuch a meaſure muſt neceſſarily be followed by a civil war. This terrific idea ſuggeſted the mildeſt conduct on the part of the coloniſts, and ought indeed to have had its due effect on the proceedings of government. Addreſſes were drawn up by the council of Boſton, and preſented to general Gage. In theſe the colonies urged, that their claims were no other than the claims of Engliſhmen, and that their grievances had ariſen from a ſeries of oppreſſions by former governors. The general would not liſten to this remonſtrance, and had his ſentiments confirmed by a counter addreſs from ſome friends to government at Boſton; another inſtance of the folly of oppoſing the few to the many.

When

When the repreſentatives met at Salem, they renewed their propoſals for a general congreſs, appointed five deputies from that province, and voted 5ool. for their neceſſary expenſes. According to the eſtabliſhment of the colony, the governor's aſſent was neceſſary to theſe acts, but that being, as you may ſuppoſe, peremptorily refuſed, the money was raiſed by voluntary contribution, and the aſſembly, foreſeeing that the governor would attempt to diſſolve them, refuſed admittance to his ſecretary, who came for that purpoſe, and publiſhed a declaration expreſſive of their ſenſe of the public danger, and recommending to diſcontinue trade with Great Britain. It was upon this occaſion, that the merchants exhibited a zeal and patriotiſm of which we have few examples. It was ſuppoſed, that men, who muſt always be the greateſt loſers in civil tumult, would be the firſt to join iſſue with government, and cruſh the aſpiring efforts of the malecontents. The merchants, however, in an addreſs to the governor, proclaimed their abhorrence of the idea, equally diſhonorable to themſelves and to their country; that they were now enabled, and would embrace the opportunity, to profit by the diſtreſſes of Boſton; and while they made this ſacrifice, they declared at the ſame time, that they were ready to promote a reconciliation, by any meaſures compatible with the ſafety and dignity of Britiſh ſubjects. Such an avowal of ſentiments, even in the worſt of cauſes, ought to command our veneration. It was repugnant to the acknowledged practices

of trade, and was therefore ſingular. It militated againſt their actual intereſt, and muſt have been ſincere.

To complete the defeat of government meaſures, when a propoſition was made in the aſſembly to pay for the damaged tea, it was rejected by a very great majority. The government, thus weakened and crippled, were not altogether without friends. The commercial connexion between the mother country and the colonies was a tie not eaſily to be broken. The views of commerce were narrow. It was ſuppoſed that by the ceſſation of trade both countries muſt be ruined. This conſideration therefore was common to both, and although the coloniſts were ſpurred on by a few men of declamatory talents, to liſten to no terms of accommodation, and to puſh matters to the extremity, yet it is probable, that a ceſſation of hoſtile meaſures on the part of government, preciſely at this point, might have given the mother country time to pauſe, and to recollect (for ſhe had often experienced it) that a general ſenſe of oppreſſion is not to be diſſipated by force. And the coloniſts, dreading the fatal conſequences of a civil war, might have yielded on their part to a certain degree, or, on the removal of the port-bill, &c. might have returned to their allegiance. But the arrival of the bills relative to Maſſachuſett's Bay, and that for quartering the troops in America, convinced them that they had nothing to hope from Great Britain, and that they muſt now collect ſuch powers as could be ſpeedily organized for the

public defence. While a general congreſs was eagerly called for, the committee of correſpondence at Boſton bound themſelves by what they termed, a ſolemn league and covenant, to ſuſpend all commercial correſpondence with Great Britain, and to renounce all communication with thoſe who ſhould refuſe to join in this agreement. This league was induſtriouſly circulated, and the form of it adopted in other places. It was in vain that general Gage proclaimed it an unlawful, hoſtile, and traiterous combination, and enjoined the magiſtrates to puniſh the perſons concerned in it. The people proceeded to chuſe repreſentatives for the general congreſs, and thoſe again choſe deputies, whoſe members bore a proportion to the extent of the province. The congreſs was appointed to be held at Philadelphia. Its purpoſe was to form the plan of a ſyſtem of conduct from the united deliberation of the colonies in general; and the members were alſo empowered to lay before Great Britain the claims of the injured coloniſts. So reſolute were they to ſacrifice their intereſt to what they valued at a higher rate, that Virginia and Maryland, and the two Carolinas, which depended moſt on exports, reſolved not to purchaſe any more ſlaves from Africa, or the Weſt Indies; and to turn their lands into paſture and improve the breed of ſheep, that the loſs of their tobacco trade might be as little as poſſible felt. The American magiſtrates, in the mean time, informed the governors, that their power was no more. They had no mob to oppoſe, and they could not pretend to reſiſt the will of the majority.

Numerous as the diſcontented party was, they had, as I have before obſerved, chiefly confined themſelves to the publication of reſolutions, and the aſſertion of their claims on the juſtice of Great Britain; but the arrival of the troops from Ireland, and other places, and the report that a regiment had been poſted at Boſton Neck, in order to force the inhabitants into ſubmiſſion, determined them to oppoſe force to force. A conſiderable body of men from Worceſter county, prepared to march to the aſſiſtance of their brethren at Boſton. The new counſellors appointed by the crown, and the courts of law, could give no effect to their proceedings; the coloniſts went on in the moſt orderly and expeditious manner to provide for the exigencies of impending war. They declared themſelves ready to die in defence of their rights. They remonſtrated with the governor on the injuſtice of his ſeizing the ammunition lodged in the arſenal at Cambridge and Charlſtown, and his fortifying Boſton Neck. He anſwered, that no uſe was to be made of the cannon, &c. unleſs their hoſtilities ſhould render it neceſſary. This did not amount to a declaration of his ſentiments, and they continued their preparations.

The congreſs, conſiſting of fifty-one delegates, met at Philadelphia*, and commenced with an addreſs to the governor, in which they deprecated his endeavours to reduce them into ſubmiſſion by force. The governor retaliated with complaints of their hoſtilities, and the violation

* *Sept.* 4, 1774.

of chartered rights, and warned them againſt provoking government any farther. His authority, however, was gone: he could not even procure the loweſt mechanics to erect barracks for his ſoldiers, and in revenge, he ſent ſome ſailors to ſpike up the cannon on one of the principal batteries belonging to Boſton. The congreſs, on the other hand, had the ſatisfaction to ſee that all their reſolutions had the validity of laws, and aſſured general Gage, who diſputed the legality of their aſſembling, that the whole colonies were unanimous againſt his, and the late parliamentary proceedings. They drew up a long ſtatement of grievances, and traced them as far back as the year 1764. This is a proof that the violence of the preſent diſaffection was not ſudden, and it has been ſince aſcertained, with tolerable accuracy, that the ſeeds of a ſeparation from Great Britain had been ſown in America even before that period. The congreſs next proceeded to draw up a petition to his majeſty, a memorial to the people of Great Britain, an addreſs to the colonies in general, and another to the inhabitants of Maſſachuſett's Bay. After finiſhing theſe addreſſes, the congreſs adjourned: during the fifty-two days of their ſitting, they had been unmoleſted by the governor's proclamations, and were perfectly regardleſs of his refuſal to ſanction their authority. Such were in America the conſequences of the parliamentary proceedings, detailed in my laſt letter.

It became neceſſary that the opinion of parliament ſhould be taken as early as poſſible on

theſe occurrences. Accordingly, a new parliament met on the 30th of December, but although his majeſty, in his ſpeech, adverted to the ſpirit of diſobedience which prevailed in the province of Maſſachuſett's Bay, no mention was made of the additional ſupplies. The eſtimates were formed upon a peace eſtabliſhment; even a reduction of four thouſand ſeamen took place. The conſideration of American affairs was poſtponed till after the Chriſtmas holidays It was then * that lord Chatham, after a long abſence, appeared in his ſeat, to reprobate the meaſures purſued againſt America, and to open a plan for conciliation, before it ſhould be too late. The firſt part of this plan was an addreſs to his majeſty, for recalling the troops from Boſton. But the miniſtry were averſe to relax, unleſs America would acknowledge the ſupremacy of Great Britain; and his lordſhip's motion was loſt by a great majority. The table of the houſe of commons, however, became ſoon covered with petitions from the city of London, and other commercial towns, and great mercantile bodies. Theſe occaſioned great debates, as to the manner in which they ought to be received, but their purpoſe was finally defeated. The petition ſent from the American congreſs, and preſented by Mr. Bollan, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Lee, was rejected, as coming from an illegal aſſembly. Every motion, indeed, of a conciliatory kind, was treated with ſeverity; every attempt to avert the miſchiefs

* *Jan.* 20, 1775.

of civil war was deſpiſed. The miniſterial majorities were undiminiſhed by argument. Lord Chatham made a ſecond effort, by preſenting a bill, entitled "A proviſional act for ſettling the troubles in America, and for aſſerting the ſupreme legiſlative authority, and ſuperintending power of Great Britain over her colonies." But this, although recommended by the full vigor of his lordſhip's eloquence, and ſtrengthened by arguments which many then thought, and all now confeſs to be unanſwerable, was not even allowed to undergo the parliamentary form of lying on the table.

Lord North, on the other hand, bent on keeping no terms with the Americans, and following a ſyſtem more likely (if it had ſucceeded) to extirpate than to ſubdue, brought in a bill for reſtraining the trade and commerce of the provinces of Maſſachuſett's Bay and New Hampſhire, the colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Iſland, and Providence Plantation in North America, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the Britiſh Weſt India Iſlands, and to prohibit ſuch provinces and colonies from carrying on any fiſhery on the banks of Newfoundland, or other places therein to be mentioned, under certain conditions, and for a limited time. No bill, perhaps, was ever more eagerly conteſted both within and without doors. If you look back to the proceedings of congreſs, and to the various petitions preſented againſt the bill, you will be ſenſible that it was the very ſtep of all others to be avoided in the exiſting circumſtances of

the caſe. It was, however, carried by a great majority. I may obſerve, that in the courſe of the debates on the affairs of America, a queſtion of law was diſcuſſed, namely, whether the Americans were or were not in a ſtate of *rebellion*. The crown lawyers anſwered this in the affirmative. The minority, without directly entering into its merits, averred that it was of very little conſequence; the point in diſpute was, whether it would be prudent to *declare* them to be in a ſtate of rebellion.

As the miniſtry had now been ſucceſsful in every motion that tended to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem of coercion, and, as will ſoon be ſeen, to exaſperate the minds of the coloniſts, what followed was matter of conſiderable ſurpriſe. Lord North advanced a conciliatory motion, the purport of which was, that when the governor, council and aſſembly, or general court of his majeſty's provinces, or colonies, ſhall propoſe to make proviſion, according to their reſpective conditions, circumſtances, and ſituations, for contributing their proportion to the common defence, ſuch proportion to be raiſed under the authority of the general court, or general aſſembly of ſuch province, or colony, and diſpoſable by parliament; and ſhall engage to make proviſion alſo for the ſupport of civil government, and the adminiſtration of juſtice in ſuch province, or colony, it will be proper, if ſuch propoſal ſhould be approved of by his majeſty in parliament, and for ſo long as ſuch proviſion ſhall be made accordingly, to forbear, in reſpect of ſuch province, or colony, to levy

any duties, tax, or aſſeſſment, or impoſe any further duty, tax, or aſſeſſment, except only ſuch duties as it may be expedient to impoſe for the regulation of commerce; the nett produce of the duties laſt mentioned, to be carried to the account of ſuch province, colony, or plantation reſpectively. The miniſter's friends thought that he was now granting too much; the oppoſition, that he was granting nothing at all; but the bill, upon the whole, ſeemed ſo contradictory to the former declarations of the houſe, that his lordſhip was obliged to explain away the contradiction, by ſaying, that no declaration of the houſe could bind to a ſtrict adherence to any former reſolution relative to the ſubmiſſion to be required of the colonies, previous to a relaxation on our ſide: and he frankly confeſſed, that the reſult of our taxing the colonies had proved unproductive in point of revenue. But this explanation was not plauſible enough to ſatisfy many of his own friends, and the oppoſition contended that the relaxation was not enough to produce any effect on the colonies, who would diſcover in it the irreſolute weakneſs of our councils, and would take encouragement to perſevere in their reſiſtance. While we were aſſerting an imaginary ſupremacy, we were, in fact, giving the Americans a real ſuperiority. Other motions for a reconciliation, brought forward by the friends of America, were after a ſhort hearing rejected, and this of lord North's paſſed by a great majority. The miniſtry either did not know, or affected not to know, that it was the right, and not

the mode of taxation, which the colonies diſputed. Beſides, in this bill, his majeſty's governors, councils and aſſemblies, are called upon, whereas at this time, ſuch governors, councils and aſſemblies, exiſted in name only; their power and influence were gone for ever.

While theſe violent meaſures were purſued in Great Britain, the colonies were preparing for war. They cheriſhed ſome faint hopes that their petitions would not paſs unheeded; but ſelf-preſervation would admit of no abatement of their vigilance. The ſouthern as well as the northern colonies began to arm, and hearing that the exportation of arms and ammunition to America had been prohibited, they inſtantly eſtabliſhed manufactures of theſe articles, and ſoon were enabled to ſupply themſelves. At Rhode iſland, the people ſeized above forty pieces of cannon which belonged to the crown. The inhabitants of New Hampſhire poſſeſſed themſelves of a ſmall fort, and vigorous efforts were every where made in ſupport of the common cauſe. The congreſs, who met at Cambridge, in Maſſachuſett's Bay, paſſed ſeveral reſolutions relative to the preparation of ammunition *. The *minute-men*, a kind of militia, were embodied for ſervice, and as the proclamations of government had nowiſe tended to cruſh ſuch proceedings, general Gage was induced to try what force could do. The coloniſts having collected ſome ſtores at the town of Concord, he ſent a large body of troops to deſtroy them; the militia of the country were, however, alarmed,

* *Jan.* 1775.

and having endeavoured to diſpute the paſſage of a bridge with the king's troops, a ſkirmiſh took place, in which the militia were obliged to retreat with the loſs of ſome killed, and ſome taken priſoners. An engagement of a more ſerious nature afterward took place at Lexington, in which ſixty-five of the king's troops were killed, and more than two hundred wounded and taken priſoners: the provincials reported that they loſt no more than ſixty, two thirds of which were killed. This was the firſt blood ſhed in this unhappy quarrel. Each party accuſed the other of having given the provocation; but if we conſider the indignant minds of the Americans, and the high ſpirit of the king's troops, who could not brook the reſiſtance of a raw, undiſciplined miiitia, the provocation of the day may be equally ſhared between them, while the real cauſe of the war, now fatally commenced, is to be ſought for in a higher ſource. The news of this engagement quickly ſpread over the colonies; the militia which ſurrounded Boſton amounted to many thouſands; the names of Putnam, Ward, Pribble, Heath, Preſcot, and Thomas, appear among their commanders. A line of encampment was formed round their head quarters at Cambridge, and the congreſs, in an addreſs to the inhabitants of Great Britain, laid the blame of the late hoſtilities upon the king's troops, and declared that the people of America had no alternative but death or freedom. Paper currency was iſſued to ſupport the eſtabliſhment of an army, and obedience to general Gage was formally renounced.

LETTER LXVIII.

THE quarrels of nations in ſome reſpect reſemble thoſe of individuals. The operation of the iraſcible paſſions is the ſame in both. A blow is not to be forgiven: it precludes all reaſoning, and muſt be returned; it is an injury which did not before exiſt, and muſt be atoned for, as a preliminary to all future agreement. After the affair at Lexington, it was not difficult to foreſee that the horrors of a civil war were inevitable; one aggravation followed on the heels of another, and the contending parties, by mutual provocations, ſtifled the ſentiments of brotherhood, and blaſted the hopes of reconciliation. The provincials of Boſton, feeling the diſadvantages of their confined ſituation, requeſted permiſſion from the governor to leave the town, or at leaſt to remove their women and children. This was granted, upon condition of their laying down their arms, with which, when they complied, the governor revoked his grant, and the few that were afterward permitted to go, were obliged to leave all their effects behind them. In reſentment of this uſage, the congreſs prohibited all connexion or commerce with ſuch places as had not yet revolted from their allegiance to the mother country. The province of New York acceded to theſe proceedings, and preparations, were made for its defence. A body of men, not exceeding two hundred and forty, took

poſſeſſion, by ſurpriſe, and without bloodſhed, of Ticonderago, Crown Point, and other fortreſſes which commanded the paſſes between the Britiſh colonies and Canada. With theſe they ſeized alſo two veſſels, and materials prepared at Ticonderago for building others. Nor were theſe precautions unneceſſary. The king's troops, about the end of May, were reinforced by ſeveral regiments from Great Britain and Ireland, commanded by the generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. Upon this the congreſs reſolved, that no bills or drafts ſhould be negotiated with the officers of the army, nor any neceſſaries diſpoſed of to them. The unanimity of the coloniſts appears in nothing more than the readineſs with which theſe commands were obeyed.

To break this union, general Gage offered the king's pardon to all who would lay down their arms, excepting Meſſ. Hancock and Adams, who were deemed ringleaders, and unworthy, of mercy. This offer had no other ſucceſs than to be conſidered as a declaration of war, and Hancock was elected preſident of congreſs; a honor which he probably owed at that time, to his being ſingled out as a victim to the wrath of government. A party of the continental troops, who had been ſent to Charleſtown, completed, in one night, upon Bunker's hill, a ſmall but ſtrong redoubt, with intrenchments and a breaſtwork, and this amid the fire from the king's ſhips and floating batteries. About noon, general Howe, with nearly 2000 men, marched from Boſton againſt theſe men. After ſome

manoeuvres on both ſides, a furious engagement took place *, in which the king's troops were at firſt worſted, and probably, would have either been cut to pieces or driven from the place, had not general Clinton, who now arrived from Boſton, rallied them, and obliged the provincials to deſiſt from their works. The miſchief done by this engagement was dreadful. Charleſtown was, by ſome accident, ſet on fire in various places, and burnt to the ground. The king's troops loſt above a thouſand men, of whom more than two hundred were killed, and of the latter nineteen were commiſſioned officers. The provincials are ſaid to have loſt only four hundred and fifty in all. Immediately after this action, the coloniſts, undiſmayed by the terrors of a Britiſh army, the ſtrength of which they had now tried, began to fortify another hill, oppoſite Bunker's hill, which produced ſeveral ſkirmiſhes. To add to the difficulties which the Britiſh army had to encounter, the Canadians, who had been ſolicited for this purpoſe, were not cordial in rendering aſſiſtance to the royal cauſe. An attempt was alſo made to involve the coloniſts with the Indians, but it did not ſucceed. In recording theſe tranſactions, it is impoſſible to juſtify them: they were founded on a crooked policy. In reſolving on a ſyſtem of coercion, there might be ſomething of firmneſs; but, in carrying it into effect, we can only trace the progreſs of infatuation.

* *June* 17.

In the month of July, the congreſs, who had not yet wholly abandoned pacific meaſures, drew up another declaration, an addreſs to the inhabitants of Great Britain, one to thoſe of Ireland, and a petition to the king. In the declaration they ſay, "Our internal reſources "are great, and, if neceſſary, *foreign aſſiſtance* "is undoubtedly attainable." Theſe words paſſed unheeded at the time, but you will ſoon find they had a meaning. The colony of Georgia, hitherto not included in lord North's prohibitory acts, now joined their brethren, drew up a petition to the king, and ſent five members to congreſs. This completed the union of the thirteen colonies. The congreſs appointed George Waſhington, Eſq. to be general and commander in chief of all the American forces. Mr. Waſhington, beſide conſiderable military ſkill, poſſeſſed an unblemiſhed character, and inviolable attachment to the cauſe of the coloniſts. Among the field officers we likewiſe find the names of Ward, Lee, Schuyler, Putnam, and Gates, ſome of whom had formerly ſerved in the Britiſh army. When generals Waſhington and Lee joined the camp at Boſton, the arrangements made for the pay &c. of the army, and the favor in which they were held by the inhabitants, gave them ſuperior advantages.

The coloniſts, who as yet had acted principally on the defenſive, now formed the bold deſign of ſending a force to invade and reduce Canada. The force appointed to this ſervice conſiſted of three thouſand men, commanded

by generals Montgomery and Schuyler. The expedition, though not ſucceſsful, afforded both armies various opportunities of ſignalizing their courage. The Americans proceeded as far as Quebec, where they were repulſed, and obliged to turn the ſiege into a blockade. General Carleton, however, the Britiſh commander, recovered the province, and the continental army were obliged to retire with great loſs of men killed, and many taken priſoners. Among the killed was general Montgomery, of whoſe bravery his enemies generouſly bore teſtimony.

The war commenced in Virginia from a circumſtance apparently trivial. Lord Dunmore, the governor, began to entertain ſuſpicions of the Virginians, and by ordering the powder, which had been depoſited in Williamſburgh, the chief city, to be removed on board a ſhip in James' river, excited reciprocal ſuſpicions in their minds. In their meetings they reprobated his conduct, and obliged the receiver general to give ſecurity for the payment of the value of the powder. The governor, in a proclamation, termed this an act of rebellion; and after laying before the provincial aſſembly lord North's conciliatory propoſitions, which he endeavoured to recommend from every conſideration of peace and intereſt, he retired on board a man of war which lay off Yorktown. A ſingular negotiation then commenced between the governor and the burgeſſes, they entreating him to return, and he declaring his fears for perſonal ſafety. Mutual recrimination took place, and the propoſitions

propoſitions of Lord North were rejected on the grounds which influenced the other colonies. The governor ſtill perſiſted in retaining his ſituation on board the ſhip, but invited the burgeſſes to meet him there. The burgeſſes conſidered this as a high breach of their rights and privileges, and having concluded the ſeſſion, a convention of delegates was appointed to tranſact the buſineſs of the colony. Theſe began with a declaration ſimilar to that drawn up by the other colonies. With this the allegiance of Virginia to Great Britain ended, and the hoſtility and deſolation which followed were natural conſequences.

Lord Dunmore, having collected what marine force he could, prepared to reſiſt the inſurgents; bodies of troops were ſent on ſhore to plunder, and being oppoſed by the Virginians, many lives were loſt. The king's ſhips alſo made an attempt to burn Hampton town, but were beat off with the loſs of ſome men, and a tender. Martial law was now proclaimed, and the governor's forces were increaſed by a conſiderable number of blacks and whites, who were promiſed their freedom on condition of joining the royal ſtandard; but a detachment of theſe having endeavoured to ſurpriſe the coloniſts in their intrenchments, were all either killed or taken priſoners. Lord Dunmore, who had left his ſhip previous to this engagement, again retired to it. The provincials having got poſſeſſion of ſome cannon and ſtores, entered Norfolk, and the king's ſhips retired to a greater diſtance. Very ſoon after, however, this town

was reduced to aſhes by the fleet, after a deſperate engagement. The loſs being immenſe, and the conflagration wanton, it cannot be wondered if the minds of the Americans were now exaſperated to the higheſt pitch. It would far exceed the limits of this ſketch, were I to notice all the petty engagements which took place in the ſeveral provinces, as the war extended itſelf. The only important event of this year which remains to be noticed, is the act of confederation and perpetual union, paſſed by the aſſociated colonies. This confederation was declared to be "The united colonies of America," for their common defence, for the ſecurity of their liberties and property, and their mutual and general ſafety and welfare. It aſcertains the power of congreſs, and preſcribes the mode of its action, and is declared to be eſtabliſhed, until the terms of reconciliation propoſed in the petition of congreſs to the king are agreed to, the obnoxious acts repealed, reparation made for the injury done to Boſton, for burning Charleſtown, and till all the Britiſh troops are withdrawn from America. On theſe events taking place, the colonies are to return to their former connexions and friendſhip with Great Britain, but on failure thereof, this confederation is to be perpetual. Some reſolutions were at the ſame time paſſed for the encouragement of foreign trade, and for retaliation in caſe any perſon ſhould be puniſhed for an adherence to the American cauſe.

This confederation was not at firſt agreed to by all the colonies, but what happened in

the courſe of the following year removed their ſcruples, and it became the ſolemn act of the united colonies. Such is an outline of American tranſactions to the cloſe of the year, and from it you will gather the importance of thoſe parliamentary meaſures which now come to be reviewed.

The parliament was opened * by a ſpeech from the throne, of more than uſual length, in which all that had paſſed in America during the receſs was detailed, offers of foreign aſſiſtance were announced, and an addition of ſupplies ſtated to be an object of neceſſity, in order to reduce the colonies to obedience. The addreſſes in anſwer to this ſpeech were combated with the uſual force of oppoſition. The war now entered into was declared to be unjuſt and impolitic, and it was foreſeen that its conſequences would be fatal. Large ſupplies were, however, granted, and foreign troops were engaged in the ſervice. By a bill introduced ſoon after the meeting of parliament, all trade and intercourſe was interdicted with the American colonies; and the property of the coloniſts, whether ſhips or goods, were declared to be forfeited to the officers and crews of his majeſty's ſhips of war who might be the captors. It was alſo enacted, that the maſters, crews, and other perſons found on board American veſſels, ſhould be entered, and conſidered as in his majeſty's ſervice. The operation of this law was to be ſoftened in the caſe of ſuch

* *Oct.* 26, 1775.

colonies as returned to their allegiance. It is needleſs to recapitulate the objections to this law. They are ſufficiently obvious. With the Americans, it was now a point of political neceſſity to reſiſt the mother country. With the Britiſh parliament it became a point of honor to ſubdue the Americans. The law now enacted, completed the union of the colonies, and was not inaptly termed "A bill for carrying more effectually into execution the reſolves of congreſs."

The propriety of employing foreign troops againſt the colonies was warmly debated. The miniſtry, however ſaw nothing but the abſolute neceſſity of the war, and the employment of foreign troops was a leſſer neceſſity ariſing from it. The oppoſition ſtrongly urged, that the Americans, driven likewiſe by neceſſity into a war, would not fail to copy our example, and avail themſelves of the aſſiſtance of foreign troops, if they could procure them. The troops of Heſſe Caſſel, however, and of the duke of Brunſwick, were engaged to the number of 16,000. The other proceedings of parliament conſiſted of ſeveral unavailing attempts on the part of the minority to procure a reconciliation with America. Mr. Penn, the American, was examined in the houſe of peers, reſpecting the actual ſtate and views of the colonies. The duke of Richmond moved, that the petition of congreſs was ground for a conciliation of the unhappy differences at preſent ſubſiſting between Great Britain and America, but this was negatived. Mr. Burke and Mr. Hartley revived their propoſitions to the ſame

effect, but in vain, though it was at this time that the oppoſition derived the greateſt aid from the brilliant talents of Mr. Charles Fox. The oppoſition, indeed, however deficient in numbers, formed a combination of talents that are not often met with. During this ſeſſion, the land-tax was voted at four ſhillings in the pound, and ſome changes took place in the arrangements of adminiſtration, but none in the ſyſtem. The ſeſſion concluded on May 23.* It is ſingular, that every diſcharge of miniſterial thunder was anſwered by a ſimilar peal from the Americans; the bills paſſed in parliament were exact counterparts to the reſolves of congreſs.

LETTER LXIX.

THE ſtate of affairs in America at the cloſe of laſt year was in all reſpects new. A war with the mother country was actually begun, and when, the hopes of reconciliation becoming fainter, the queſtion aroſe how to carry it on, the coloniſts found that they had to ſtruggle with difficulties of a very peculiar nature, but which it would appear they had the art to conceal from their enemies. Their army had been raiſed for a temporary purpoſe only, and rather for defence than offence. It was compoſed of troops in all points irregular, of men who took up arms in the ſanguine hope that the courage diſplayed in a few ſkirmiſhes would induce the Britiſh to compound the

A. D. 1776.

diſpute, but who had never weighed the fatigues of war, and could not brook the tranſition from the eaſy comforts of civil, to the diſcipline and rigor of military life. Their ardor accordingly began to abate; great numbers left the army; new levies were made with the greateſt difficulty; tardineſs and irreſolution kept back their recruits, and at the commencement of the preſent year*, the whole American army did not amount to ten thouſand men.

Boſton was, at this time, ſuffering all the diſtreſſes of a cloſe ſiege; the ſupplies ſent by government arrived late, and part of them were intercepted by the coloniſts. General Waſhington was counſelled to make an aſſault on this place, but he was too conſcious of the inſufficiency of his ammunition to endanger his army and his cauſe by a raſh enterpriſe. That, however, he might not be ſeen to diſregard his duty, or diſcredit his vigilance, he informed his officers, that as his army, by the acceſſion of a numerous militia, amounted now to nearly 17,000 men, he thought it might be proper to make an attempt on the Britiſh lines. In this he was oppoſed, and it was recommended to him to take poſſeſſion of Dorcheſter heights. This was achieved in the dead and ſilence of night**, and ſuch a defence erected before morning, that the Britiſh admiral aſſured general Howe it would be impoſſible to keep one of his ſhips in the harbour, unleſs the enemy were diſlodged. A violent ſtorm preventing

* *A. D.* 1776. ** *March.* 4.

this deſign, the Britiſh officers, in conſequence of a previous reſolution, began to evacuate the town. On the 17th, their troops, amounting to 9000 men, left the place, after ſpiking up ſome cannon, and deſtroying part of the caſtle. Many of the townſmen, who were well affected to government, accompanied them, and after a ſhort voyage they arrived at Halifax. The ſituation of the Britiſh troops in Boſton had been very unpleaſant, and it was judged that a central poſition for the grand army would enable it to act with more effect. Some of the king's ſhips only were left to protect ſuch veſſels as might arrive, and general Waſhington with his army marched into the town immediately on the embarkation of the Britiſh troops.

In Canada, where the Americans hoped to have erected their ſtandard, they were completely unſucceſsful. Obliged to raiſe the ſiege, they had the mortification to ſee their ſmall fleet deſtroyed on the lakes. The Britiſh had poſſeſſion of lake Champlain, and general Carleton, whoſe troops took poſſeſſion of Crown Point, after driving the coloniſts from it, would have alſo contended with the main body at Ticonderago, but the artful manoeuvres of general Gates interrupted his progreſs, and the approach of winter obliged him to retreat. Theſe operations were the cauſe of ſome petty engagements, the whole of which, in the courſe of this war, it is not my plan to deſcribe. The recovery of Quebec having been now accompliſhed, the Britiſh troops next propoſed to extend their arms to ſome of the ſouthern colonies, and to take poſſeſſion of New York.

Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, the latter of whom had juſt arrived with a fleet from England, determined to attack Charleſtown, the capital of South Carolina, a place of great importance, and which they ſuppoſed might be carried by the aſſiſtance of ſhipping. Charleſtown was in a ſtate of defence, principally ariſing from ſome works erected on Sullivan's iſland, which guarded the channel. Sir Peter Parker commenced the attack on this iſland with two fifty gun ſhips, four frigates of 28 guns, and four leſſer armed veſſels. The fort mounted only twenty-ſix cannon, the largeſt of which were 26 pounders; the garriſon did not exceed 400 men, commanded by general Moultrie. After a briſk engagement, which laſted ten hours, the fleet were obliged to retire with a conſiderable loſs of men. General Clinton was unable to co-operate by land, and in a few days the troops reimbarked. This was the firſt time the provincials had reſiſted a fleet, and as they did not loſe thirty men, they were elevated with their ſucceſs.

New York, from the facility with which it could be maintained, and its relative poſition, was of the utmoſt importance to the contending powers. It was well known to general Waſhington, that the Engliſh had determined to make themſelves maſters of it, as a prelude to more ſerious operations, and here therefore the great ſtand muſt be made. Admiral lord Howe, and his brother Sir William, were appointed to command the expedition againſt this place. The Britiſh army conſiſted of

nearly 30,000 men, amply provided. General Howe arrived, about the end of June, off Sandy Hook, with the troops which he had removed from Boſton. In two days the admiral joined him with reinforcements at Staten Iſland, where the inhabitants received them with great cordiality. A conſiderable body of loyaliſts here teſtified their attachment to the Britiſh government. At this very moment, however *, the congreſs publiſhed their declaration of independence. Reflecting men could not but be ſtruck with the circumſtance of its being publiſhed at ſuch a time of danger, when the Britiſh army was double that of the Americans, the latter raiſed only for a temporary purpoſe, and when its leaders had no certainty that it could be kept up.

The Britiſh commander found Long Iſland and New York in a poſture of defence. General Waſhington had fixed his head quarters in the city, and, profiting by former experience, determined on a war of poſts, or the raiſing ſlight fortifications in various places, which retarded and embarraſſed the operations of the enemy. This commander, however, was not without his difficulties. Uncertain where the enemy might make their attack, he had to anſwer all the applications from the people, of various quarters, for ſupport. The appearance of the enemy off New York ſeemed to bring the matter to a deciſion, and the inhabitants prepared to oppoſe their whole force.

* *July* 14.

The Howes, part of whoſe commiſſion was to offer peace, iſſued proclamations, ſignifying that they were empowered to grant pardon to all thoſe who, though they had deviated from their allegiance, were willing to return to their duty; and to declare any colony, province, &c. to be at peace with his majeſty. The congreſs republiſhed theſe proclamations, from a conviction that they would produce a very oppoſite effect to that intended. At the ſame time, lord Howe ſent a letter to *George Waſhington, Eſq.* which this gentleman refuſed to receive, as it was not addreſſed to him with his military rank and title. General Howe then ſent adjutant general Paterſon with a letter to *George Waſhington, etc.* and hoped that the *et cetera* would remove the objection. After ſome debate on this trifling abſurdity, equally diſgraceful to both parties at ſuch a criſis, the Britiſh commiſſioners were informed that "from what appeared, their powers were only to grant pardon, and that thoſe who had committed no fault, wanted no pardon."

Theſe negotiations proving fruitleſs, the Britiſh army commenced its operations. The American army in and near New York did not exceed 18,000 men, ſcattered at conſiderable diſtances in poſts. The enemy landed without oppoſition between Utrecht and Graveſend, two ſmall towns, and after a ſeries of marches, an engagement took place, in which the Americans loſt or had taken upward of one thouſand men, and the Britiſh about 450. General Waſhington, who had removed the greateſt part of his

army to Long Iſland, finding the approach of the enemy irreſiſtible, determined to retreat. There are few occurrences in military hiſtory more remarkable than this retreat. Nine thouſand men, with all their baggage and ammunition, were conveyed over a river, more than a mile in breadth, to New York, in leſs than thirteen hours, and this entirely unknown to the Britiſh army, who were not a quarter of a mile diſtant. In the morning the latter took poſſeſſion of the works evacuated by this well conducted retreat. Immediately after, an interview was agreed upon between ſome members of congreſs and lord Howe, but it ended in a mere interchange of perſonal civilities.

A deſcent on New York iſland was the next ſtep to be taken. When general Howe began to land his men between Kep's bay and Turtle bay, a party, who had been ſtationed at a breaſtwork to oppoſe him, retreated on the firſt appearance of his troops. Waſhington in vain attempted to rally them. Next day, the ſame men partly retrieved their honor in a ſkirmiſh; but the place was no longer tenable, and the Americans retired to the north end of the iſland. An accidental fire broke out, ſoon after the Britiſh troops entered the city, which deſtroyed about a thouſand houſes *. General Howe now endeavoured to draw the enemy into action, but, after various manœuvres, he was not able to accompliſh what would probably have been fatal to the American cauſe. In the courſe of

* October 12.

this experiment, general Washington, at one time, obtained an eligible position, and seemed to wish for an engagement; but that not taking place, he crossed the North river, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Fort Lee. General Lee was left at North Castle with upward of 7000 men. General Howe afterward determined to attack Fort Washington, the only post on New York island in the hands of the Americans. An adequate force being sent against it, an engagement ensued, in which, of the British, nearly 1200 were killed or wounded. The fort capitulated on honorable terms: the men, amounting to 2700, were considered as prisoners of war.

Success emboldened the British troops to follow up their late victories, and lord Cornwallis was sent to attack Fort Lee, the garrison of which retreated precipitately, leaving their artillery and stores. General Washington determined to retire to Augusta county in Virginia. The progress of the American cause was now truly critical; their spirits were sunk, numbers were deserting, and the new army inlisted very slowly. Lord Cornwallis pursued general Washington's troops close in the rear as far as the Pensylvania side of the Delaware. The British army also took possession of Rhode Island, and blocked up a squadron under the command of commodore Hopkins; and to complete the defeat of the colonists, general Lee was taken prisoner at Baskenbridge. Nothing could appear so destitute of hope as the affairs of the continental army; the seat of war being now removed to

the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, the congreſs were obliged to retreat to Baltimore, leaving a ſort of dictatorial power with general Waſhington. Their courage, however, was not abated. So far were they from yielding in any meaſure to the terms held out by the mother country, that ſome of them even now propoſed to ſeek the aſſiſtance of France, and, as an equivalent, to transfer to that country the monopoly of trade which Britain had enjoyed. This not being concluded upon, they reſolved to offer freedom of trade to every foreign nation. In all their diſtreſſes, and when their boaſted independence and union ſeemed to be on the verge of diſſolution, they would liſten to no abatement of their former claims on the juſtice of the mother country.

Toward the cloſe of this year, their army began again to recruit, and general Waſhington being conſiderably reinforced, determined to croſs the Delaware, and attack the Britiſh troops which lay at Trenton. The latter were deceived by an illgrounded ſecurity, and after a bloody engagement were obliged to lay down their arms. About nine hundred were thus taken priſoners, ſix hundred eſcaped, and the reſt were killed. After the action *, general Waſhington returned to Penſylvania to ſecure his priſoners, and recroſſing the river again, took poſſeſſion of Trenton. On this, part of the Britiſh army advanced againſt the place, marching from Princetown, and after driving a detachment of

* *Dec.* 25.

the Americans from a poſt a little to the northward of Trenton, were themſelves checked at the bridge over Sandpink creek, which runs through Trenton. On each ſide of this creek, the two armies ſat down for the night. But general Waſhington, thinking he could attack the remainder of the enemy left at Princetown, retreated in the night, reached Princetown early in the morning *, and engaged three regiments of the Britiſh troops, ſixty of whom were killed, and about three hundred taken; the reſt made their eſcape. The American loſs, according to their report, was inconſiderable. The Britiſh now removed their whole force to New Brunſwick. In the mean time, general Waſhington retired to Morriſtown. For three months after this, no action of importance was performed. The Americans complained loudly of the rapacious cruelty and wantonneſs of the Britiſh ſoldiery, and this circumſtance revived thoſe ſentiments of freedom and union which originally animated their cauſe; the continental army began to increaſe; the congreſs applied their wiſdom to the organization of a regular force; the ſeveral colonies adopted a temporary form of government; and notwithſtanding the loſſes of this campaign, their commanders, by judicious movements, and attempting to take no advantage but what appeared certainly attainable, preſerved the main body of their troops, and deprived their enemies of thoſe opportunities of action which muſt have terminated in their favor.

* *Jan.* 3, 1777.

This protraction, while it enabled the coloniſts to recruit their armies, and to form them for ſervice, not only exhauſted their enemies, who were ſubſiſting at an enormous expenſe in a country far removed from home, and with which few of them were acquainted, but alſo gave a turn to the minds of many of the people in Great Britain. Accuſtomed to undervalue the ſtrength of ſuch empires as France and Spain, when placed in oppoſition to that of Britain, and having never before contended with other than nations of ſlaves, they had no idea of that energy, that perſeverance, and thoſe reſources, which a people fighting for their liberty can command. The motley ſucceſſes, therefore, of this campaign, were either miſrepreſented or miſunderſtood; for, at the meeting of parliament, the nation ſeemed unanimous to cruſh the rebellion in America, and conſidered the declaration of independence as an inſult that demanded immediate ſatisfaction. It was ſtated in his majeſty's ſpeech, on the opening of parliament *, that one great advantage would be derived from the declaration of independence. We ſhould have unanimity at home, founded on the general conviction of the juſtice and neceſſity of our meaſures. Certain it is, the miniſter purſued his ſyſtem of war with greater eaſe than might have been expected. A large military and naval force were voted, and although the minority diſputed every inch of ground, yet they were ſo conſcious of the inefficacy of

* *Oct.* 31, 1776.

their endeavours, that a number of them ſeceded from parliament. Near the cloſe of the ſeſſion, the additional ſum of 100,000l. a year was added to his majeſty's civil liſt. This occaſioned very warm debates, and when the bill came to be preſented for his majeſty's aſſent, Sir Fletcher Norton, the ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, addreſſed the king with unuſual freedom, ſtating that the repreſentatives of the people had granted this ſum, in a well grounded confidence, that his majeſty would apply wiſely, what they granted liberally; and feeling, what every good ſubject muſt feel with the greateſt ſatisfaction, that, under the direction of his majeſty's wiſdom, the affluence and grandeur of the ſovereign would reflect dignity and honor upon his people. The ſenſe of the houſe was ſaid to be miſrepreſented in this ſpeech, and the ſpeaker was judged to be highly culpable. Mr. Fox ended the debate, by moving, that the ſpeaker did expreſs, with juſt and proper energy, the zeal of the houſe for the ſupport of the honor and dignity of the crown, in circumſtances of great public charge. This motion, and a vote of thanks to the ſpeaker, were then carried without a diviſion. Immediately before the adjournment, lord Chatham made an ineffectual attempt to put a ſtop to the war, and with that preſcience which had ever diſtinguiſhed his public life, hinted the poſſibility of a treaty between France and America. France had not yet forgot the diſgraces of the laſt war; ſhe looked to Britain with a jealous eye, and the effects of that jealouſy will ſoon appear.

LETTER

LETTER LXX.

YOU have already, no doubt, concluded againſt the poſſibility of a reconciliation between Great Britain and the colonies. Quarrels between nations are more difficult to adjuſt than thoſe between individuals, ſo much more forcibly does the pride of human nature act with the former than with the latter, and ſo little is there room left for mutual forbearance and acknowledgments. Many plans might be imagined, and indeed were actually propoſed, to heal the breach even at this advanced period, but none that either party could adopt. Between ſupremacy on the one hand, and independence on the other, no ſafe medium could be found; and when congreſs had publicly thrown off their allegiance to the mother country, and had kept the Britiſh troops in play for a whole campaign, the clue of injuries and recriminations could not be unravelled by human aid.

We left the Britiſh and American army in winter quarters. The ſeaſon was conſiderably advanced before the campaign in the middle ſtates commenced. The American army had received ſome reſources of ammunition from France, but to balance this, the royal troops had executed two ſucceſsful expeditions, by which they deſtroyed, or brought away an immenſe quantity of proviſions, arms, &c. Theſe, however, were not conducted without bloodſhed. In one of them, nearly three hundred men loſt their lives, or were taken. In the

month of June, the Britiſh army was reinforced by about one thouſand men, raiſed in New York and Jerſey. Much time was ſpent from the month of May, by Sir William Howe and general Waſhington, in endeavours to outwit each other, by feigned advances and retreats. In Auguſt, the Britiſh fleet entered the Cheſapeak, from the eaſtern heads of which the troops advanced boldly within two miles of the American army, poſted at Newport. General Waſhington, retiring to high ground near Chad's fort in the Brandywine creek, purpoſed to diſpute the paſſage, and, contrary to his uſual policy, hazard a general action. Both armies diſplayed their valor, but the action was not deciſive. The royaliſts had nearly ſix hundred killed and wounded, and the Americans loſt more than double that number. The marquis de la Fayette, a young French nobleman, and a volunteer in the American cauſe, diſtinguiſhed himſelf in this action, and was carried from the field wounded. A few days after, the two armies were about to have again engaged, but a heavy rain, which ſpoiled the American ammunition, obliged them to retreat. Some idea may be formed of their hardſhips and their unbroken ſpirit, from this ſingle circumſtance, that above a thouſand of them had performed all their late marches without ſhoes or ſtockings, and had their feet lacerated by the ice ſo as to leave a track of blood behind them. On the 20th of this month, general Grey cut to pieces a detachment of three hundred coloniſts, whom he had ſurpriſed in the night, without loſing

above five or six of his own men. Congress, at this time, found it necessary to retire to York-town, while Sir William Howe entered Philadelphia. Leaving him to fortify this city at leisure, general Washington formed a design of attacking his troops at German-town; the best dispositions were made for this expedition, but as the British army were alarmed, it failed of success. The latter, however, lost nearly five hundred men, including the wounded and prisoners, and the Americans upward of a thousand, of whom four hundred were prisoners.

The colonists having built a fort on Mud-island, which commanded the passage on the Delaware, the royal army had to encounter the greatest difficulties, and many lives were lost in practising the necessary manoeuvres to dislodge them. The importance, however, of the object, obliged them to run all risks, as, without being masters of the Delaware, the possession of Philadelphia was rather dangerous than useful. The fort on Mud-island was defended with uncommon bravery; but a ship of war having made her way so as to be able to play with effect upon it, the continentals were obliged to leave their position, after the greater part of the works had been destroyed.

In the beginning of December, Sir William Howe again attempted to bring the American army to a general engagement, but after various marches, countermarches, and some skirmishes, the campaign concluded without this desirable object being attained. The royal army wintered in Philadelphia, and general Washington posted his main force at Valley Forge, within

ſixteen miles of the enemy. The Britiſh had been ſucceſsful in almoſt every engagement, but the great purpoſe of the war was ſtill fruſtrated by the ſpirited reſiſtance of the continentals, and ſtill more by that ſyſtem of protraction which general Waſhington had adopted, and which was the beſt poſſible for the ſafety of the colonies; for it does not appear that he could have ſucceeded in any general engagement.

The campaign was carried on by the northern army, under general Burgoyne, with various ſucceſs, and ended, at length, in the total defeat of his army. It was their object to form a line of communication between New York and Canada. The army deſtined for the neceſſary operations conſiſted of ſeven thouſand Britiſh and German troops, with a prodigious quantity of artillery. Several of the ſavage nations were alſo induced to join the Britiſh army, a circumſtance which does not appear to have been defenſible, as it was, in fact, arming wild and ferocious beaſts againſt our countrymen, and certainly contributed greatly to inflame the averſion of the Americans to every propoſal of reconciliation.

From Quebec, general Burgoyne advanced with his army to Crown Point*, and the American troops at Ticonderoga, finding themſelves unable to cope with him, evacuated the place with great ſecrecy and expedition, leaving a vaſt quantity of ſtores and ammunition, the loſs of which was ſo ſeverely felt, that congreſs

* *June* 30.

thought proper to inſtitute an inquiry into the conduct of the commander, who did not eſcape without imputations. Succeſs now followed the royal arms with ſuch rapidity, that the cauſe of the colonies in this quarter was given up as hopeleſs. It was Burgoyne's purpoſe to force his way into Albany, or, at leaſt, to be able to join the army at New York. When engaged on this expedition, in the courſe of which his men underwent fatigues that are almoſt incredible; colonel St. Leger was endeavouring to co-operate with him in the Mohawk country, and about the beginning of Auguſt, attempted the ſiege of fort Schuyler. This place was defended with ſo much bravery, and the Indians proved ſo reluctant to act with ſpirit, that the colonel was obliged to raiſe the ſiege, and leave a part of his artillery behind him.

Fortune was now changing ſides. General Burgoyne, when on his way to Albany, detached about ſix hundred of his troops to Bennington, to ſeize a magazine of ſtores and proviſions; but the militia of New Hampſhire proving more numerous than was expected, the greater part of this detachment were either killed or wounded, and another party ſent to their aſſiſtance were alſo routed. Theſe actions inſpired the Americans with confidence, and greatly diſconcerted the plans of the royal army, by detaining it fully a month, waiting for ſupplies, while the continentals were rallying from all quarters. The next ſtep Burgoyne took was to croſs Hudſon's river, and in four days he

encamped on the heights *, about two miles from the continental camp, where general Gates had now the chief command. An engagement here took place, which laſted three hours, with great deſtruction to both ſides; but night coming on, the battle was indeciſive. Such was the ſituation after this of the royaliſts, that a junction with the forces at New York was abſolutely neceſſary. Diſpatches were accordingly ſent to general Clinton, urging his immediate aſſiſtance. A delay of nearly three weeks had diminiſhed the ſtock of proviſions, and an action happened, in which the Americans had the advantage, and both armies loſt ſeveral brave officers. The Britiſh, thus embarraſſed, removed in the courſe of one night, and this probably firſt ſuggeſted to the American commander, that it was poſſible to cut off their retreat. To avoid this, general Burgoyne moved to Saratoga, where, after ſuffering every hardſhip and mortification, and making many fruitleſs attempts to extricate his army, he was, at length, obliged to offer a capitulation on honorable terms. His troops were allowed to march out with the honors of war, their arms being to be piled, and their artillery left on the river's edge: a free paſſage was granted to the troops to England, on condition of not ſerving again in North America. The reſt of the terms were as favorable as circumſtances would permit. If they appear more ſo than the Americans were obliged to grant, let it he remembered, that it was the

* *Sept.* 14.

beſt policy to ſhow lenity and forbearance in a caſe like the preſent. Thus, by a ſeries of ill-judged or ill-conducted meaſures, the whole royal army, conſiſting of five thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety men, were compelled to ſurrender to the Americans, with all their arms and ammunition. Sir Henry Clinton had endeavoured to conduct an expedition to aſſiſt Burgoyne, but for ſome reaſons, which have never been ſatisfactorily explained, that commander was left to his humiliating fate. The conſequences of a victory ſo important as this, may be eaſily conceived. In Europe, it raiſed the character of the American troops; and it is ſuppoſed that, according to the natural operation of ſucceſs on the human mind, it turned the ſcale of public opinion in favor of their courage, their ſtrength, and their final ſucceſs.

When the Britiſh parliament aſſembled *, the news of this defeat had not reached England. The armaments which had been for ſome time preparing in the ports of France and Spain, induced our miniſtry to make a conſiderable augmentation of naval force. Large ſupplies were voted, and reſiſted by the oppoſition on the uſual grounds: the loſs of trade was beginning to be felt, and the iſſue of a war with France and Spain could only complete our deſtruction. To ſtrengthen theſe arguments, and while the augmentation of the army and navy was the ſubject of contention between the two parties, the news of general Burgoyne's defeat arrived.

* *Nov.* 20.

His expedition being the favorite ſcheme of the miniſtry, their diſappointment was not to be concealed, and the exultation of the minority was proportionate. But the loſs of ſo great an army rendered it neceſſary to raiſe regiments with all poſſible ſpeed. An appeal was made to the people, and anſwered according to the wiſhes of government. Mancheſter, Liverpool, and many other great towns, raiſed a thouſand men each. The city of London having refuſed to offer the uſual bounty money, large ſubſcriptions were raiſed by individuals, and this example was followed in various parts of the nation. In Scotland, ſeveral thouſand men, chiefly Highlanders, were raiſed with aſtoniſhing expedition. The voice of the people was decidedly for war, and the miniſter, availing himſelf of this appearance of loyalty and unanimity, purſued his ſyſtem with very little control from parliament. In the midſt of his operations, however, he ſurpriſed the houſe, by advancing ſome motions of a conciliatory nature. Two bills were paſſed*, one of which enabled his majeſty to appoint commiſſioners with ſufficient powers to treat with the congreſs, or any provincial aſſembly, or with general Waſhington, or any other perſon. After ſome debate, theſe were carried, but few entertained hopes that the plan would be productive of any ſubſtantial good.

The deſigns of France, which ſome of the minority had foreſeen, became, at length, evident

beyond all diſpute. His majeſty communicated to the parliament *, that the court of France had ſigned a treaty of amity and commerce with certain perſons employed by his majeſty's revolted ſubjects in America, and that he had thought proper to withdraw his ambaſſador from that court. The French, it was diſcovered, had diſpatched count D'Eſtaing, with twelve ſhips of the line, from Toulon, and admiral Byron, with a fleet from Portſmouth, was ready to ſail after him. But the negligence of the miniſtry, in not providing ſooner againſt the Toulon fleet, was ſeverely cenſured, and was vindicated but in a feeble manner.

The remainder of this ſeſſion was employed in motions brought forward by the minority, for the production of papers which, on the ground of danger, the miniſtry uniformly reſiſted; and in diſputes relative to Burgoyne's army, the conduct of the lords of the admiralty, &c. In the courſe of a debate, on a motion made by the duke of Richmond for withdrawing our troops from America, the venerable earl of Chatham, while anſwering ſome part of the duke's arguments, was ſeized with a fainting fit, which in a few days ended in his death. The loſs of this able ſtateſman was ſeverely felt; all ranks and parties joined in honoring his memory. His character may be ſummed up in few words. His country knew him to be incorruptible; and the enemies of his country found him to be invincible. Few men have better

* *March* 17.

tempered the love of liberty with the love of their country. It is to be regretted, that he had been ſo long excluded from the councils of ſtate: he whoſe opinions had never proved falſe, and whoſe plans had never proved abortive. What he was convinced was wiſe, he undertook; and what he undertook, he never departed from.

As the conciliatory bills introduced by the miniſter conſtituted the laſt effort of the kind which Great Britain made, it is neceſſary to dwell for a moment on the nature and effect of them. They arrived in America before congreſs had heard of the effect of their negotiation with France, and, after being taken into conſideration, congreſs declared that they could not hold any conference with any commiſſioners on the part of Great Britain, unleſs they ſhould, as a preliminary, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or elſe, in poſitive and expreſs terms, acknowledge the independence of the ſtates. The commiſſioners here alluded to were governor Johnſtone, lord Carliſle, and Mr. Eden. They opened their commiſſion ſoon after this by a letter to congreſs, in which they offered to concur in the following articles: To conſent to a ceſſation of hoſtilities, both by ſea and land: to reſtore free intercourſe, to revive mutual affection, and renew the common benefits of naturalization, throughout the ſeveral parts of this empire: to extend every freedom of trade that our reſpective intereſts can require: to agree that no military forces ſhall be kept up in the different ſtates of North America, without

the conſent of the general congreſs, or particular aſſemblies: to concur in meaſures calculated to diſcharge the debts of America, and to raiſe the credit and value of the paper circulation: to perpetuate our union by a reciprocal deputation of an agent or agents from the different ſtates, who ſhall have the privilege of a ſeat and voice in the parliament of Great Britain; or, if ſent from Britain, in that caſe to have a ſeat and voice in the aſſemblies of the different ſtates to which they may be deputed reſpectively, in order to attend the ſeveral intereſts of thoſe by whom they are deputed: in ſhort, to eſtabliſh the power of the reſpective legiſlatures in each particular ſtate, to ſettle its revenue, in civil and military eſtabliſhment, and to exerciſe a perfect freedom of legiſlation and internal government, ſo that the Britiſh ſtates throughout North America, acting with us in peace and war, under one common ſovereign, may have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege, that is ſhort of a total ſeparation of intereſts, or conſiſtent with that union of force, on which the ſafety of our common religion and liberty depends.

Whether the congreſs ſuſpected the ſincerity of theſe offers, or that, after a negotiation had commenced, they might be thrown off their guard, and leſs favorable terms be inſiſted upon; whether their minds, irritated by the devaſtation of their country, were now ſteeled againſt amity with Great Britain; or whether they thought they had already pledged themſelves to France beyond what they could

honorably retract (for they had now heard that the treaty was ſigned) may admit of an argument. Perhaps all theſe reaſons combined in forming the anſwer they returned to the commiſſioners, which was in ſubſtance, that they had already decided againſt the conciliatory bills, and that no other proof of the diſpoſition of he king of Great Britain toward a peace would be accepted, than his explicit acknowledgment of the independence of the ſtates, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies. Notwithſtanding this, the commiſſioners left no means untried to procure a more amicable adjuſtment; but the congreſs were inflexible; and ſome reports of an attempt to bribe certain members of congreſs, though poſitively diſavowed by the commiſſioners, gained the people over to their opinion. Finding all endeavours to be fruitleſs, the commiſſioners iſſued a manifeſto, in which, among other things, it was ſtated, that the whole conteſt was now changed, and the queſtion was how far Great Britain might, by every means in her power, deſtroy or render uſeleſs a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of France. Under ſuch circumſtances the laws of ſelf-preſervation muſt direct the conduct of Great Britain, and if the Britiſh colonies are to become an acceſſion to France, will direct her to render that acceſſion of as little avail as poſſible to her enemy.

We now return to the progreſs of the war. Larger narrations may admit of a minute detail of ſkirmiſhes and petty encounters; but theſe ſo

much reſemble each other in all wars, and contribute ſo little to the main purpoſes of hiſtory, that we ſhall notice only the more important actions. The ſpring* was nearly over before the contending armies began to act. Count d'Eſtaing's ſquadron of twelve ſhips of the line and four frigates entered the Delaware in the beginning of July, which rendered it neceſſary for the Britiſh to evacuate Philadelphia and remove to New York, as a grand centre. The paſſage of the royal army into New Jerſey was effected with incredible perſeverance, amid innumerable difficulties. The Americans detached large bodies to fall upon their rear; and to oppoſe thoſe Sir Henry Clinton placed his grenadiers, light infantry, and chaſſeurs, in his rear, and the baggage in front. General Lee was appointed to command the American army on this expedition, and great hopes were entertained of its ſucceſs; but when general Waſhington marched up to aſſiſt, he found that Lee had given orders for a retreat. Soon after, the artillery of both armies engaged; about 250 of the Americans were killed and wounded, and the royaliſts, including priſoners, loſt about 350; but night put a ſtop to the action, and, before morning, the Britiſh army had retreated, leaving a few wounded men behind them, who could not be carried off, and reached Sandy Hook without farther interruption. General Lee was brought to trial** for his conduct on this day, and ſentenced to one year's ſuſpenſion

* *A. D.* 1778. ** *June* 30.

from public ſervice. The Americans now poſted at White Plains, and afterward marched to Middlebrook in Jerſey. Congreſs returned to Philadelphia, from whence they had been abſent only nine months. Here they received a Monſieur Gerard as plenipotentiary from the court of France; a circumſtance which in their opinion gave a dignity and conſequence to their confederacy.

Count d'Eſtaing appeared on the coaſt of America when the Britiſh fleet and army were ſtationed in the harbour and city of New York. Had d'Eſtaing arrived when the Engliſh fleet was in the Delaware, his ſuperior force muſt have made an eaſy prey. He faced them however, in a few days, off Sandy Hook; but not thinking an attack either prudent or practicable, he ſailed for New York, and by this laſt motion loſt an opportunity of capturing admiral Byron's ſmall fleet. The expedition of the French admiral againſt Rhode Iſland, after various manoeuvres, proved abortive; and the inefficacy of his meaſures, added to the loſs of the ſeaſon, which was now drawing to a cloſe, diſheartened the Americans, whoſe expectations of his ſucceſs were more ſanguine than either his courage or his conduct could juſtify. The Engliſh fleet were inferior in force, but in bravery and management, greatly ſuperior. As ſoon as Sir Henry Clinton found that the Americans had left Rhode Iſland, he ſent a detachment to Bedford and its neighbourhood, who deſtroyed above ſeventy ſail of ſhipping, with various magazines, warehouſes, and ſtores, to a great

amount. Another expedition of a ſimilar nature was conducted, about the ſame time, with equal ſucceſs, and a regiment of American light dragoons were ſurpriſed and cut to pieces by a party commanded by major-general Grey. A fruitleſs attempt againſt Eaſt Florida is to be added to the liſt of American loſſes, while the conqueſt of Savannah, the capital of Georgia, decided the preſent campaign almoſt in favor of the Engliſh.

The ſyſtem of war became now ſo far changed, that the year we are entering upon * preſents us with little more than various acts of diſtreſs and deſolation, committed by detachments from the reſpective armies. Two expeditions, the one to Virginia, and the other to Connecticut, afford melancholy inſtances of the miſeries of civil war. The moſt wanton barbarities were practiſed on the inhabitants without regard to age or ſex, and property of all kinds was deſtroyed. How theſe outrages were complained of by one party or vindicated by the other, is not now a matter of inquiry.

Two events of importance, which diſtinguiſhed the war in the weſtern world, were the capture of Stoney Point, on North River, and the ſurpriſe of the Britiſh garriſon of Powles Hook, oppoſite to New York. By the former, the Britiſh loſt 63 men killed, and 543 who were taken priſoners; in the latter, 30 were killed, and 160 taken. In both actions, the courage of the American commanders was not

* *A. D.* 1779.

more conſpicuous than their humanity. In other attempts, however, of this kind, they were not equally ſucceſsful; and from the peculiar ſituation of general Waſhington's army, he was unwilling to weaken it by dividing it into predatory detachments.

In the ſouth, the Britiſh were now for the firſt time endeavouring to re-eſtabliſh government in Carolina and Georgia. Their armies were reinforced by great bodies of loyaliſts; but, as a conſiderable part of them inliſted merely for the ſake of plunder, or from motives of fear, and temporary ſecurity, they contributed neither to the ſucceſs nor the reputation of our arms; for no ſooner was a body of them defeated in a ſkirmiſh than the reſt returned to their homes. Notwithſtanding this, the Britiſh were extending their faſineſſes ſo far, that general Lincoln thought it adviſeable to croſs into Georgia, and bound their progreſs; but of 1500 men ſent on this expedition, only 450 returned to their camp, the reſt being killed by the Engliſh, or taken priſoners, or drowned in attempting to make their eſcape. A like fate attended another expedition of the Americans into Georgia; and the Britiſh army, flushed with ſucceſs, puſhed on to the capture of Charleſtown, although, as it was found to be too ſtrongly fortified, the deſign was for the preſent abandoned. On the other hand, a great body of the Americans, who attempted to beſiege Savannah, were defeated and compelled to raiſe the ſiege. D'Eſtaing commanded on this occaſion, and, after the defeat, reimbarked

reimbarked his troops and artillery, and left the continent; and the American troops retreated over the river Savannah. The hiſtory of this campaign is ſingular. During the whole of it, the perſeverance and intrepidity of the Engliſh were as remarkable as the heſitating and ill conducted exertions of the Americans: yet, notwithſtanding the former, the Engliſh were yet confined to their original boundaries in Georgia; and notwithſtanding the latter, the ſpirit of the Americans, though weakened, was not broken; and no ſtate, town, or village, ever thought of accepting the terms held out by the commiſſioners.

It remains to be mentioned, that, about the end of laſt year, count d'Eſtaing took St. Vincent's and Grenada; and the Britiſh, St. Lucia. About the ſame time, the marquis de Bouille, governor of Martinico, ſurpriſed and took the iſland of Dominica.

During theſe tranſactions abroad, government found it expedient to call forth the moſt powerful exertions. Admiral Keppel was appointed commander of the fleet at Portſmouth *; and, about the month of June, he was enabled to ſet ſail with twenty ſhips of the line. War had not at this time been proclaimed, nor repriſals ordered; but coming up with two French frigates, the admiral conceived himſelf to be juſtified in taking them; and learning, at the ſame time, that the French fleet at Breſt conſiſted of thirty-two ſail of the line, he returned

* *A. D.* 1778.

to Portſmouth, and, on the 3d of July, he was enabled to take to ſea with thirty ſail of the line. On the 23d the two fleets were in ſight of each other, and, on the morning of the 27th, an engagement took place, which laſted with great fury for upward of three hours. One hundred and thirty-three of the Britiſh were killed, and three hundred and ſeventy-three wounded: the French loſt upward of two thouſand. This would have been "a proud day for Great Britain," but for an unfortunate miſunderſtanding between the commander in chief and admiral Palliſer, vice admiral of the blue, which prevented the action from being deciſive. Few events have occaſioned a greater clamor at home. Admiral Keppel was tried by a court martial, who, after a hearing of thirty days, honorably acquitted him of all the charges. Neither he, however, nor Palliſer, ſerved afterward in the war.

When the parliament met *, the oppoſition propoſed to inquire, by what fatal councils, and unhappy ſyſtem of policy, this country had been reduced to her preſent ſituation; and, as uſual, boldly attacked the miniſtry on their incapacity and inconſiſtency. General Burgoyne arraigned lord George Germaine, the ſecretary for the American department, with great acrimony; and Mr. Fox, at ſeveral times, moved to cenſure the conduct of lord Sandwich, the firſt lord of the admiralty. The conduct of admirals Keppel and Palliſer, and of lord and

* *Nov.* 25.

general Howe, was alſo the ſubject of great altercation in both houſes. Evidence was heard, and the miniſtry appeared to ſtand convicted of egregious blunders, and of great negligence, in conducting the war. But while theſe diſputes were in agitation, another enemy was announced to the houſe *. Spain had joined its ancient animoſities with thoſe of France, and the ambaſſadors from the reſpective courts were recalled. The minority now urged the neceſſity of withdrawing our forces from America, and directing them againſt the houſe of Bourbon. With the ſame effect, they recommended a total change of men and meaſures. The whole ſeſſion preſented a ſcene of uſeleſs altercation, and cloſed its ſittings about the beginning of July.

The war between the French and Engliſh in the Eaſt Indies commenced, near the end of laſt year, by an attack on the French ſettlement at Pondicherry. The ſiege of this important place was conducted by major general Munro, commander of the Eaſt India company's troops on the coaſt of Coromandel, and by ſea he was aſſiſted by the Engliſh fleet under Sir Edward Vernon, who had driven a ſuperior French fleet from the place. The garriſon of Pondicherry made a brave defence, but the governor was obliged at length to capitulate **, and on terms which did honor to the generoſity of the victors. The company's troops, which amounted to upward of 10,000, had about 220 ſlain,

* *June* 17, 1779. ** *Oct.* 1779.

and near 700 wounded. The garriſon, amounting only to 3000, had 200 killed, and near 500 wounded.

In the beginning of this year, the French ſent a ſquadron, commanded by the marquis de Vaudreuil, and a land force commanded by the duke de Lauzun, to the coaſt of Africa, where they eaſily took poſſeſſion of the Britiſh ſettlements, forts and property, at Senegal. Sir Edward Hughes, on the other hand, ſeized the iſland of Goree, and placed a ſtrong garriſon in it. During the ſummer, the French made an attempt on the iſland of Jerſey, which was defeated by Sir James Wallace taking ſome of their frigates. The miniſtry had as yet adopted no plan to prevent a junction of the French and Spaniſh fleets, which was actually accompliſhed about the middle of Auguſt, when this formidable combined force, to the terror of the whole nation, entered the Britiſh channel, and after parading for two days off Plymouth, retired without offering any attack. Their purpoſe, if they had any beyond that of oſtentation, ſeems to have been to watch the Britiſh fleet; but Sir Charles Hardy, who commanded that fleet, entered the channel without any interruption. Such, and ſo various, were the chequered events of the two laſt campaigns.

LETTER LXXI.

THE campaign we are now entering upon was compoſed of few circumſtances which tended to accelerate the deciſion of the important

queſtion. After the departure of the French fleet, Sir Henry Clinton embarked with a great army, on an expedition againſt the capital of South Carolina: and vice admiral Arbuthnot was to ſecond him with a naval force adequate to the object in view. Though the paſſage of this army, from New York to Charleſtown, was tedious, and in ſome reſpects diſaſtrous, yet they arrived before the place in a condition for immediate attack. On the army taking poſt at Aſhley river, the aſſembly of the ſtate, then ſitting, broke up, and appointed the governor to take proper ſteps for its defence. The town was diſcovered by the Britiſh troops to be ſo completely fortified, that Sir Henry Clinton thought it neceſſary to wait for reinforcements from New York and Savannah; but, immediately on their arrival, he began the ſiege with great ſpirit and effect *. His army and navy had a decided ſuperiority, and, after a variety of ineffectual operations on the part of the town, general Lincoln, the commander, was under the neceſſity of ſurrendering on the terms offered by Sir Henry Clinton, the nature of which is highly honorable to his generoſity and magnanimity. The garriſon was to march out of town, and to depoſit their arms in the front of the works, but without beating a Britiſh march, or uncaſing the colors. The continental troops and ſeamen were to keep their baggage, and remain priſoners of war, until exchanged. The militia were allowed to return to their homes,

* *March* 29, 1780.

as priſoners on parole, and the other inhabitants to retain their property on the ſame terms.

The loſs of men killed in this ſiege was nearly equal, but the amount of the priſoners of war, in conſequence of the ſurrender, was at leaſt ſix thouſand, a great proportion of which were officers. General Lincoln had to encounter the cenſures of the cautious on this occaſion; but it does not appear that he erred otherwiſe than by departing from the ſyſtem purſued by general Waſhington, who never attempted to defend any poſt or place without the poſſibility of ſecuring a retreat in caſe the day ſhould be loſt.

Before general Clinton went on any other expedition, he took ſome meaſures to bring the inhabitants to a ſenſe of their duty as Britiſh ſubjects. He publiſhed ſundry addreſſes and remonſtrances, and combining fear with perſuaſion, poſted garriſons in different parts of the country, to keep the people in awe. Two thouſand men were marched to North Carolina, and colonel Tarleton defeated and cut to pieces a detachment of 300 Americans at Wachaws, with hardly any loſs on his own ſide. After theſe proceedings, Sir Henry Clinton embarked for New York, leaving four thouſand men for the ſouthern ſervice, the chief command devolving on lord Cornwallis, who, in providing for the civil and commercial arrangements of this province, found the people in general ſubmiſſive: in many places they laid down their arms, and partly from fear, and partly from a deſire of peace, profeſſed their obedience as ſubjects. The perſons who had been taken in

arms in Charleſtown were now releaſed from their parole, and it was expected they would have embraced ſuch an opportunity to arm in favor of the Britiſh government; but to this they could not be reconciled, and many began to arm in their own defence; ſo difficult will it always be found to conquer the minds of men.

In the mean time, the Americans were preparing a force to check the progreſs of the Britiſh army, and a colonel Sumpter, at the head of a party of exiles from South Carolina, defeated a detachment of the royal army poſted in a lane at Williamſon's plantation *. Encouraged by this ſucceſs, his troops ſoon augmented to the number of 600, who diſtinguiſhed their intrepidity in other ſkirmiſhes; and the Britiſh commanders had now the mortification to ſee hoſtilities renewed where they hoped they had eſtabliſhed peace and loyalty. An American Army was likewiſe approaching to South Carolina, under the command of general Gates, and the cauſe of congreſs ſeemed to revive. Gates' army amounted to four thouſand men, including militia. Lord Cornwallis had not above half this number; yet he marched from Charleſtown to Cambden, and determined to give battle. In the night the two armies met, and an engagement enſued **, in which the continentals were completely defeated, with great loſs of men and ſtores, owing, among other circumſtances, to the cowardice of their militia. The capture and defeat of Sumpter's detachment,

* *July* 12. ** *Aug.* 15.

by colonel Tarleton, followed this engagement, and the ſucceſs of the Britiſh, at this period, might be the theme of panegyric, had it not been ſullied by certain cruel and impolitic regulations, adopted in order to enforce obedience among the people, but which in fact produced a quite contrary effect. Toward the cloſe of this year, a Britiſh detachment was defeated near the confines of North and South Carolina, by a large body of newly raiſed American militia. The Britiſh, under the command of major Ferguſon, behaved with uncommon ſpirit, but their encampment being injudicious, and no chance of retreat being left, they were obliged to ſurrender themſelves priſoners to the number of 800. The gallant Ferguſon was mortally wounded.

The campaign in South Carolina affording no other action of importance, we turn now to the affairs in the northern ſtates, which bore a ſingular complexion at this time. General Kniphauſen undertook an excurſion into Jerſey from New York with five thouſand men. His progreſs was marked with conſiderable devaſtation, as the American troops were not able to reſiſt; but the expedition ended without apparently having any object in view, and certainly without accompliſhing any action of importance. The Americans, at this time, had to contend with great difficulties, among none of the leaſt of which was the want of ſpecie, and the depreciation of their paper currency. Theſe occaſioned diſcontents, and ſome few inſtances of mutiny in their army; yet amid all their

diſtreſſes, and wants, we do not find that the Britiſh army could at all avail themſelves of theſe circumſtances. For what only extreme diſtreſs occaſioned, a very moderate ſupply would remove; and, as has been already obſerved, the means taken to ſeduce them from their duty, only ſerved to bind them cloſer to it: while, on the other hand, the judicious and humane expedients contrived by the American congreſs and commanders, in a ſeaſon of deep diſmay, cheered the hearts and ſupported the hopes of the ſoldiers.

In this criſis, a French fleet and army arrived at Rhode Iſland *. The fleet, commanded by M. de Ternay, conſiſted of ſeven ſhips of the line, five frigates, and five ſloops. The army amounted to ſix thouſand men, under count de Rochambeau. The arrival of admiral Greaves, however, with ſix ſail of the line, and his conſequent junction with admiral Arbuthnot, who had four, gave the Britiſh fleet a decided ſuperiority, and they determined to attack the French at Rhode Iſland; this being found impracticable, the Engliſh blocked up the fleet and army of the enemy, and thus rendered them uſeleſs to the Americans; a diſappointment which was yet exceeded by another, which ſhowed how little was to be expected from the wiſdom of the French commanders. Count de Guichen, the French admiral in the Weſt Indies, was to have joined M. de Ternay, and thus have gained a ſuperiority

* July 10.

againſt which the Engliſh could not have ſtood; but, inſtead of this, Guichen ſailed for France, leaving the Americans no other conſolation than they could derive from the hopes of another campaign.

While the aſſiſtance, ſent by their new ally, was thus rendered ineffectual, an enemy appeared in the bowels of their confederacy, who had like to have involved their whole cauſe in ruin. General Arnold, who had ſo often fought for the independence of the ſtates, now engaged, for a ſtipulated ſum, to betray into the hands of the Britiſh, an important poſt, the keeping of which he had ſolicited; this was called Weſt Point, the Gibraltar of America, and built for the defence of North River. It was a place of vaſt conſequence, and the repoſitory of their moſt valuable ſtores. The loſs would have been ſeverely felt, and, perhaps, would at this time have been fatal, but the ſcheme was baffled in the outſet. Major André, an Engliſh officer of acknowledged ſpirit and bravery, was ſelected to conduct the ſecret negotiation between general Arnold and Sir Henry Clinton. By miſtake, André fell into the hands of ſome of the ſcouts belonging to the Americans, and his papers being found upon him, the whole plot was diſcovered. André was tried, and condemned to be hanged as a ſpy. It was in vain that the Britiſh commander endeavoured to make him be conſidered in any other light, or that he himſelf ſolicited to die as a ſoldier. The ignominious puniſhment was inflicted without abatement. Arnold, however,

made his eſcape, and joined the Britiſh army, of which he was made a brigadier-general. The Britiſh univerſally cenſured general Waſhington for his ſeverity toward André, while the Americans were of opinion, that he had forfeited thoſe privileges which a fair and open enemy may claim. It does not, indeed, appear poſſible to conſider André in any other light than that of a ſpy; but his courage and private virtues gained him many friends, who, in the caſe of a perſon of indifferent character, would never have thought twice on the ſubject. General Arnold wrote an ingenious defence of his conduct, in abandoning the cauſe he had fought and bled to ſupport, and profeſſed that he went cordially with the Americans before their alliance with France, but from that time he had become a loyaliſt, and only retained his arms and command, waiting for an opportunity to ſurrender them to Great Britain. On this defence it is needleſs to add any comment.

I ſhould now return to the war with France and Spain, but it will be neceſſary firſt to glance at the ſtate of affairs at home, eſpecially as an event of a very extraordinary kind occurred in the metropolis, which cannot ſo properly be introduced as in its connexion with the affairs of parliament.

When the legiſlature aſſembled in the latter end of laſt year, the miniſters announced their deſign to proſecute the war with ſpirit, and to break that moſt unnatural confederacy which had been formed againſt this iſland. The oppoſition, reſuming their accuſtomed topics,

cried aloud for a change of men and meaſures, deprecating a continuance of that ſyſtem of folly and debility, which had brought the nation into its preſent dilemma, and entailed diſgrace on the Britiſh name and arms. In Ireland, a ſpirit of diſcontent had long been obſerved, ariſing from encumberances on their trade, and they had now formed a powerful military aſſociation, the uſe of which, it did not appear, was to be confined to protection from foreign enemies only. Alarmed at this mode of reſiſtance, lord Shelburne endeavoured to call the attention of the houſe to an object of ſo much urgency, and ſome bills were brought in by the miniſter for the relief of the trade of that country.

Petitions were now preſented from all parts of England againſt the meaſures of adminiſtration. Many undeniable events had confirmed the arguments of the oppoſition, and a general bias appeared in favor of economy and retrenchment in public expenſes. In parliament, however, little or nothing was conceded to the wiſhes of the minority, though now backed by a great proportion of the people, and a prorogation was approaching, when the metropolis became on a ſudden a ſcene of confuſion and ferocious riot, that has no parallel in our hiſtory. It is neceſſary to trace this to its ſource.

About two years ago, a bill had paſſed both houſes, granting certain relief to the Roman catholics from the penal laws. The times were conceived to be ſufficiently liberal for this indulgence, and it is probable, that it would

have been univerſally acceptable, had not a ſet of bigots ariſen, who diſgraced the cloſe of the eighteenth century, by inflaming the minds of the people againſt the Roman catholics. Lord George Gordon, a member of the houſe of commons, had often talked wildly on this ſubject, but little attention was paid to him, and he placed himſelf at the head of a ſociety of numerous, but obſcure individuals, who called themſelves the proteſtant aſſociation. By means of the hand-bills of this ſociety, nearly fifty thouſand perſons aſſembled, on a day appointed *, in St. George's-fields, to accompany lord George to the houſe of commons, with a petition for the repeal of the lenient act in favor of the Roman catholics. This mob proceeded over London-bridge, through the city and Weſtminſter to the parliament, where they completely ſurrounded the ſeveral avenues, waiting the fate of their petition, which was ordered to be read on the Tueſday following. On this, the majority of the mob began to diſperſe, but a body of them immediately went to the Romiſh chapel in Duke-ſtreet, Lincoln's-inn-fields, and to that in Warwick-ſtreet, Golden-ſquare, both of which they demoliſhed, burning the valuable furniture, pictures, &c. On the appearance of a party of the guards they diſperſed, and that night and the following day paſſed without any repetition of violence. On Sunday, however, the mob again aſſembled, and deſtroyed the popiſh chapel in Moorfields. Next day,

* *June 2.*

they demoliſhed ſome houſes belonging to Roman catholics in the ſame place, and dividing themſelves into parties, carried deſtruction to the houſes of ſeveral gentlemen in Weſtminſter, who had been active in promoting, what they called, the Popery Act. All this time, no efforts of any kind had been made to repreſs theſe riots. A general panic had ſeized all ranks of men. On Tueſday, the day appointed by parliament to take the petition of the proteſtant aſſociation into conſideration, the mob, as numerous as on the preceding Friday, though leſs regular, again ſurrounded the houſe, and inſulted many of the members, inſomuch that both houſes broke up, declaring that no act of theirs could be legal, while they were thus awed by a licentious mob, and ſurrounded by a military force. That night the mob attacked, and, in a few hours, ſet fire to the goal of Newgate, liberating the priſoners, who joined their deliverers; they alſo deſtroyed the houſes of ſome of the magiſtrates of Weſtminſter, of lord Mansfield, whoſe valuable manuſcripts and library were irrecoverably loſt, and of many private citizens in different parts. Parties of the guards were called out in Weſtminſter, but they either came too late, or did nothing.

On the following day, the mob, reinforced by the priſoners of Newgate, Clerkenwell Bridewell, and New Priſon, extended their havoc to various parts of the city of London and borough of Southwark, in which latter they were oppoſed by an aſſociation of the inhabitants, who killed and wounded ſeveral, took

others priſoners, and put the reſt to flight. The King's-bench priſon, however, with three houſes adjoining, and the New Bridewell, were ſet on fire, and almoſt entirely conſumed. In the city of London, the outrages of this mob were as yet uninterrupted; the valuable premiſes of an eminent diſtiller in Holborn were ſet on fire, and owing to the vaſt quantity of ſpirits in that manufactory, burnt with immenſe fury; a great many of the rioters are ſaid to have loſt their lives here, by being ſurrounded with the flames, while in a ſtate of intoxication. Nothing could exceed the terror and conſternation which pervaded the city at this time. The Bank, and all public offices, were known to be marked out for deſtruction, and property of every kind ſeemed an eaſy prey to this ferocious banditti, when an order was iſſued by the authority of the king in council, for the military to act, without waiting for directions from the civil magiſtrates, and to uſe force for diſpelling the illegal and tumultuous aſſemblies of the people. In conſequence of this, many of the rioters were killed by the military, in various parts of the town, and the lord mayor of London, recovering in ſome degree from that wretched puſillanimity, of which he was ſo juſtly accuſed, began to take ſome ſteps for the protection of the city.

On the 8th, the guards having been found inſufficient in number to defend every part of the metropolis, all the troops and militia within thirty miles were ſent for, and, by their exertions, peace was at length reſtored. Such was

the lenity, or rather the forbearance of the civil and military power, that only about two hundred and eighty, in all, of the rioters were killed, and about eighty wounded and taken priſoners. The day following this reſtoration of order, lord George Gordon was apprehended for high treaſon, and committed to the Tower; he was tried a few months after, and acquitted. Other perſons connected with the proteſtant aſſociation were alſo taken up and examined, but diſmiſſed for want of evidence.

This riot was, in every reſpect, the moſt extraordinary that ever happened. It will, perhaps, in future times, be ſcarcely believed, that a mob of obſcure and unarmed men, without a viſible plan of action, or oſtenſible leaders, ſhould carry devaſtation into every part of the metropolis for nearly a week, while the civil and military powers ſtood by as harmleſs ſpectators. That the city of London, which contains a property, the deſtruction of which could not fail to penetrate to the moſt diſtant parts of the iſland, ſhould be thus left a prey to a lawleſs rabble, is with difficulty to be accounted for. Perhaps, the formidable appearance of the petitioners, who ſurrounded the parliament-houſe, might have its ſhare in occaſioning a greater panic than had a real foundation. Perhaps the cowardly timidity of the chief magiſtrate of London, might communicate like an infectious diſorder to his fellow citizens. It is certain, that a very ſmall ſhare of ſpirit on his part, would, at the beginning, have checked the violence of the mob; but by ſome

ſtrange

ſtrange infatuation it happened, that neither in London nor Weſtminſter were any effectual ſteps taken, before a property of ſeveral millions was deſtroyed, and the commercial proſperity of the nation brought into imminent danger.

As to the cauſes of this riot, they are not ſo difficult to find, although, as is often the caſe where the mob govern, the original object was changed in the courſe of their progreſs. The proteſtant aſſociation labored hard to throw the weight of odium from their ſhoulders, and to perſuade the world that none of their body had any hand in the general deſtruction. This may be true; but they will find it not an eaſy matter to prove that none of the petitioners who aſſembled in St. George's-fields belonged to the mob; and ſtill leſs eaſy will they find it to ſeparate the ſentiments of bigotry from the actions of perſecution. There can be no doubt, that the clamor raiſed againſt the Roman catholics, and that only, was the primary cauſe of the riot. And thoſe who fly for ſupport to the paſſions of a mob, ought to learn from the hiſtory of theſe riots, that it is not by inflaming the paſſions, but inſtructing the mind, that the people can be rendered uſeful; and they ought to remember, that this mob, which firſt aſſembled to burn the chapels and deſtroy the property of Roman catholics, in a few days aimed deſtruction at all property without diſtinction. In ſome parts of the country, about this time, a riotous diſpoſition had appeared, but the miſchief done was trifling.

The buſineſs of parliament had now been interrupted for nearly a fortnight. When the houſes met, ſome altercation took place reſpecting the orders which had been given to employ the military without waiting for the directions of the civil power; and at the ſame time it was acknowledged that a delicacy in this very point had been the cauſe of all the miſchief which happened. Soon after, this parliament was prorogued, and on the eighth of September following diſſolved.

LETTER LXXII.

THE naval advantages gained by the Engliſh fleet over that of France and Spain, if not equal in proportion to thoſe of former wars, were at leaſt ſufficient to vindicate the ſuperiority of Great Britain on her proper element. Toward the cloſe of laſt year, Sir Hyde Parker, who was ſtationed in the Weſt Indies, took ſeveral war and merchant ſhips from the enemy; and rear admiral Rowley took three ſhips of war, one of forty-two, one of thirty-ſix, and one of twenty guns, having on board in all about ſix hundred men. But the moſt brilliant actions of the campaign of this year were reſerved for the gallant Sir George Brydges Rodney. This officer who was intruſted with a fleet, the particular deſtination of which was to relieve Gibraltar (now beſieged by the Spaniards) in his voyage to that place, fell in * with a fleet of twenty-two ſail of Spaniſh merchantmen under protection of ſeven ſhips of war, belonging to

* *Jan.* 8, 1780.

the royal company of Caraccas. In a few hours, Sir George made himſelf maſter of the whole fleet. About a week after, he engaged, near cape St. Vincent, another Spaniſh fleet, conſiſting of eleven ſhips of the line, and two frigates, commanded by don Juan de Langara; and, notwithſtanding the gallant defence made by the latter, Sir George carried four of their largeſt ſhips, one of eighty, and three of ſeventy guns, into Gibraltar. Two others were taken at the ſame time, one of which was driven on ſhore and loſt; the other was alſo run on ſhore, but recovered. Four ſhips of the line eſcaped, two of them very much damaged; and in the courſe of the action, the San Domingo of ſeventy guns, and ſix hundred men, was blown up. No victory could be more complete. The five men of war taken were ſoon after added to the Britiſh navy. The treatment of the Spaniſh priſoners on this occaſion, was in general ſo humane, as to make a great impreſſion on the Spaniſh nation, and the good effects of this policy was felt in the courſe of the war.

After ſupplying the garriſon of Gibraltar with proviſion and ammunition, Sir George proceeded on his voyage to the Weſt Indies, where he took the chief command of his majeſty's ſhips at the Leeward iſlands. Soon after his arrival*, an engagement happened between his fleet, amounting to twenty ſhips of the line, beſide frigates; and the French fleet, which conſiſted of twenty-three ſail of the line and ſome frigates,

* *April* 17.

commanded by count de Guichen. The day was undecided, both parties claiming the victory: but no ſhip was taken by either. The French fought bravely; from admiral Rodney's diſpatches to the admiralty, it would appear, that he did not think himſelf ſo well ſupported as he ought to have been. Of his men, one hundred and twenty were killed, and three hundred and fifty-three wounded. On the fifteenth of May, and on the nineteenth, two other engagements took place between thoſe fleets, which ended in nothing deciſive. The Engliſh loſt ſixty-eight men, and had two hundred and ninety-three wounded. The French fleet ſtated their loſs in the three engagements at only one hundred and fifty-eight killed, and eight hundred and twenty wounded. Before admiral Rodney arrived in the Weſt Indies, a part of Sir Peter Parker's ſquadron, commanded by commodore Cornwallis, conſiſting of a ſixty-four, a fifty, and a forty gun ſhip, engaged a ſquadron, commanded by M. de la Motte Piquet, of two ſeventy-four gun ſhips, a ſixty-four and a fifty-ſix; but though the action laſted the whole night, and part of the following day *, no ſhip was taken on either ſide. Rear-admiral Digby, who was appointed by admiral Rodney to carry home from Gibraltar part of his fleet with the Spaniſh prizes, fell in with a French man of war of ſixty-four guns and ſeven hundred men, which was added to the liſt of captures.

In the month of June, the French and Spaniſh fleets joined in the Weſt Indies, and compoſed

* *March* 20.

a formidable force of thirty-ſix ſail of the line. With theſe the Engliſh fleet could not have contended; and the ſituation of our iſlands appeared to be alarmingly critical. The combined fleet, however, made no attack on any of them, nor ſeemed deſirous to meet with Sir George Rodney, who at this time lay at Gros iſlet bay. The fortreſs of Gibraltar continued to be beſieged by the Spaniards, who made an ineffectual attempt to burn the Engliſh ſhipping by means of fire ſhips, but ſuch was the activity of the Engliſh, and the excellent diſpoſitions made to counteract the plot, that the Spaniards were compelled to retreat without executing their deſign in the leaſt degree.

But in Auguſt, the commerce of this country received a conſiderable ſhock, by the unexpected capture of a valuable fleet of five Eaſt India and fifty Weſt India ſhips, which were proceeding on their voyage outward, under convoy of the Ramilies of ſeventy-four guns, and two frigates, and unfortunately fell in with the combined fleet of France and Spain. The Ramilies and the two frigates eſcaped, but the merchantmen unavoidably became a prey. It was on this occaſion firſt, that the good effects of Sir George Rodney's humanity appeared. The Spaniards ſeemed to make it a point of honor to repay the favor by a ſimilar treatment of the numerous Engliſh who now became their priſoners.

The cloſe of this year was attended by a circumſtance, which although by ſome foreſeen, yet was by none ſuppoſed wanting to increaſe

the embarraſſments of Great Britain. Another enemy was added to the formidable combination already in arms to cruſh her envied power. Complaints from England had repeatedly been made to the ſtates general of Holland, that their ſhips carried on a contraband trade of ammunition, &c. with our enemies; this was as frequently denied on the part of their high mightineſſes, who retaliated, by complaining that our ſhips of war had done great miſchief to their trade, by ſtopping and capturing their veſſels, on pretence of having contraband goods on board. Various remonſtrances paſſed between the two courts on this ſubject, very little to the ſatisfaction of either; and it was eaſy to diſcover, that the temperate and conciliating language of allies, was merging into the cold and haughty ſtyle of two powers whoſe friendſhip was on the wane. An affair which happened at the concluſion of this year brought the diſpute to an iſſue. Among the papers of a Mr. Laurens, an American, who was taken on board a congreſs packet, and who was bound to Holland on an embaſſy, was the ſketch of a treaty of amity and commerce between the republic of Holland, and the united ſtates of America. The Engliſh ambaſſador at the Hague demanded that this ſhould be diſavowed on the part of the ſtates. They, after various delays, informed the ambaſſador, that his memorial was taken *ad referendum*, a tedious proceſs peculiar to the conſtitution of the republic, but which evidently appearing in the preſent caſe to be a manoeuvre to gain time, the

ambaſſador was ordered by the Britiſh court to withdraw from the Hague, and a declaration of hoſtilities was publiſhed againſt Holland *. Whatever anſwer the Dutch intended to return to the Engliſh memorial, it was plain they were not prepared for immediate hoſtilities. To have been permitted to be common carriers to all the belligerent powers, would no doubt have been far more grateful to the genius of that people. So unprepared were they for a war, that, in a few weeks after this declaration, almoſt their whole ſhipping trade fell into the hands of the Engliſh men of war and privateers, a misfortune which very conſiderably checked their firſt efforts to equip a fleet. It has been doubted, whether Great Britain was juſtifiable on the ſcore of wiſdom and prudence in thus adding another enemy to her liſt; but whatever opinion prevailed on the policy of the meaſure, its boldneſs ſeemed to invigorate the nation, between which and the republic of Holland there ever have been certain lurking prejudices, ariſing from a rivalſhip in trade, and a contrariety in genius and diſpoſition.

Although, contrary to the practice of former times, the preſent adminiſtration had carried on the war, without any ally, yet expectations of aſſiſtance from Ruſſia were entertained. But that power was never leſs diſpoſed than at preſent to co-operate with Great Britain. In the courſe of this year, a grand project was contrived by the northern courts, which they

* *Dec.* 20.

termed "an armed neutrality, for the protection of neutral navigation and commerce." The courts of Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Ruſſia, Vienna, Liſbon, and Naples, were concerned in this confederacy. The ſcheme, which originated in the court of St. Peterſburgh, was communicated by the empreſs to the courts of London, Verſailles, and Madrid. By the former, it was acknowledged with civility; but the ſatisfaction it evidently afforded to the two other courts, very plainly pointed to the nature of its operation; for they were now certain of a conſtant ſupply of every article neceſſary to carry on the war, ſafely and cheaply conveyed to them, in any quarter where it ſhould be wanted. The merit or demerit, however, of this ſcheme, does not, after all, reſt with the empreſs of Ruſſia. It has been ſince diſcovered, that ſhe was but the dupe of her miniſter, who wiſhed, for certain political purpoſes, to ruin the Engliſh miniſter at her court.

LETTER LXXIII.

WE are now arrived at the laſt campaign in North America, which began with appearances the moſt unfavorable that can be conceived to the continentals, and yet ended in the total defeat of the Britiſh army, and the complete overthrow of the royal cauſe. The events which led to this unexpected revolution were few, but ſtriking.

The preſent year commenced with the revolt of a very great part of the American army,

which formed what was called the Penſylvania line *. Independent of the wretched ſtate of the continental ſoldiers as to dreſs, proviſions, &c. ſome miſunderſtanding had ariſen reſpecting the articles of their ſervice. Thirteen hundred of them in one day aſſembled, and declared they would ſerve no longer unleſs their grievances were redreſſed. Some rioting enſued, and a few loſt their lives. Collecting all their artillery, ſtores, waggons, &c. the revolters marched out of the camp, in ſpite of the earneſt remonſtrances of their commander general Wayne, and after proceeding to a conſiderable diſtance, took an advantageous poſt, and elected officers from among themſelves. Intelligence of this having arrived at New York, Sir Henry Clinton judged it to be a favorable opportunity to induce them to join the royal ſtandard, and ſent meſſengers informing them, that they ſhould be directly taken under the protection of the Britiſh government, receive a free pardon for all former offences, and that the pay due from the congreſs ſhould be made up to them, without any condition of military ſervice, unleſs it ſhould be voluntary, and that they were only expected to lay down their arms, and return to their allegiance. They were alſo recommended to move beyond the South river, and were promiſed the protection of a body of Britiſh troops whenever they deſired it. But theſe revolters were not influenced by diſaffection to the American cauſe, and therefore rejected

* *Jan.* 1, 1781.

general Clinton's terms with diſdain, at the ſame time delivering up his meſſengers to congreſs. A committee was now ſent from congreſs to them, and aſſurances having been made, that all grievances ſhould be redreſſed, ſuch as deſired it were permitted to return to their own homes. The Britiſh meſſengers, after a trial before a board of officers, were condemned and executed. The revolters, who appear to have acted from a ſenſe of the ſtricteſt honor, refuſed the pecuniary reward offered by the preſident of congreſs for having apprehended the meſſengers. Their example, however, created a ſpirit of mutiny; about one hundred and ſixty of the Jerſey troops revolted, but with leſs juſtice and moderation; and it was found neceſſary to puniſh the ringleaders in this mutiny with ſeverity; in conſequence of which, the reſt returned to their duty.

On the outſet of this campaign, lord Cornwallis was preparing to enter into North Carolina. His firſt ſtep was conſiderably embarraſſed by the American general Morgan having attempted to poſſeſs himſelf of the important diſtrict of Ninety-ſix. It was neceſſary, if poſſible, to prevent this, and colonel Tarleton was detached with three hundred cavalry, three hundred light infantry, the ſeventh regiment, the firſt battalion of the ſeventy-firſt regiment, with two three pounders. Theſe ſoon came up with the Americans, whoſe troops were more numerous, but ſo inferior in other reſpects, that a victory ſeemed certain. After a bloody engagement, however, in which it has

been conceived, that the precipitation of the Britiſh, and the peculiarly happy diſpoſition of the Americans turned the tide of fortune contrary to all probability, the royaliſts were completely defeated. Upward of 300 were killed or wounded, and above 500 priſoners taken. Eight hundred muſkets, two field pieces, thirty-five baggage waggons, beſide horſes, fell into the hands of the Americans, whoſe loſs amounted only to 12 killed, and 60 wounded. All the detachment of the royal artillery were either killed or wounded in defence of their colors. After the engagement, colonel Tarleto retreated to Hamilton's Ford.

Diſappointed in this object, lord Cornwallis endeavoured to form a junction with general Leſlie, who had been ordered to meet him with a body of troops from Wynneſborough, while part of the army were employed in an ineffectual attempt to regain the priſoners taken by general Morgan, and intercept his corps on its retreat to the Catawba. Halting for two days to diſencumber his troops from their ſuperfluous baggage, his lordſhip marched through North Carolina with great rapidity, and reached the remoteſt extremities of the province, on the banks of the Dan. The only oppoſition he met with, deſerving of notice, was when he croſſed the Catawba at M'Gowan's ford, where general Davidſon, with a party of American militia, endeavoured to oppoſe his paſſage *; but that officer being killed in the firſt diſcharge, his

* *Feb.* 1.

men retreated, and the royal army landed without any farther interruption. At Hilſborough, his lordſhip ſet up the king's ſtandard, inviting all loyal ſubjects to repair to it. Some hundreds of the inhabitants came to the camp, but ſeemed more deſirous to ſecure themſelves than to take any active part in the war. While this attempt was making to revive loyalty, general Green, who had been appointed to an important ſervice, was forming plans to impede the progreſs of the royal army. Having in part accompliſhed theſe *, by joining a continental regiment of men raiſed for eighteen months, and two large bodies of militia from Virginia and North Carolina, he reſolved to attack lord Cornwallis' army. On the 15th the action commenced at Guildford, with great ſpirit on both ſides, and, after a ſeries of well managed manoeuvres, which ſeemed to leave victory doubtful, ſhe at length declared for the Britiſh army; but it was ſo dearly bought on their part, that there was no room for triumph. It proved that the American troops, under diſadvantages almoſt inſurmountable, were arriving at perfection in the art of war; and what was wanting in diſcipline was made up by the ſuperior ſkill of their officers. The Britiſh loſt in this battle 532 killed, wounded, and miſſing. General Green ſtated the loſs of the continentals at 329, killed, wounded, and miſſing; but the loſs of militia are not included here.

After the battle of Guildford, general Greene retreated, and lord Cornwallis removed toward

* *March* 10.

Wilmington. His army at this time was nearly deſtitute of neceſſaries; but, here meeting with refreſhment, the march was continued acroſs the country to Peterſburgh in Virginia. General Greene had followed his army for ſome time, but now conceived the deſign of oppoſing the king's forces in South Carolina. On the 19th of April, he appeared before Camden, a poſt defended by lord Rawdon with about 800 Britiſh and provincials. Finding it impoſſible to ſtorm the town, he endeavoured to induce the troops to make a ſally. Lord Rawdon, a few days after, gratified the American general's wiſhes, and attacked him in his camp with ſuch ſpirit, that the Americans were obliged to fly, and were purſued nearly three miles. The retreat of two of their companies is ſaid to have occaſioned this defeat. The loſs of the Engliſh was about 100 killed and wounded: the Americans had about 120 killed and wounded, and 100 taken priſoners. After the engagement, general Greene retired to Rugley's mills, about twelve miles from Camden, where he was contriving to repair the loſs of this day by a more certain attack on lord Rawdon. His lordſhip, ſenſible that he could not retain his poſt without hazarding his troops, evacuated the place, and marched to the ſouthward of Santee. The Americans had lately made themſelves maſters of ſeveral other poſts that had been occupied by the king's troops. In the ſiege of Ninety-ſix, however, general Greene was repulſed with great loſs. During theſe tranſactions a large body of Britiſh troops, under

the command of major general Phillips and brigadier general Arnold, embarked on an expedition, the only object of which was to deſtroy American ſtores, and this they accompliſhed to an immenſe amount, thereby exaſperating the Americans againſt the Britiſh nation, but in no reſpect advancing the royal cauſe.

Lord Cornwallis, before he reached Wilmington, after his victory over general Greene, publiſhed a proclamation in favor of the royal cauſe, holding forth conſiderable inducements to ſuch of the Americans as would accept his terms. This, it does not appear, produced much effect. While in Virginia, his lordſhip's ſituation began to be very critical; no reinforcements and ſupplies came, as were expected, from Sir Henry Clinton, at New York, who was prevented by his fears for that city, againſt which, it was ſuppoſed, general Waſhington had meditated a formidable attack, in conjunction with the marquis de la Fayette, and an immenſe body of French troops which had lately arrived from that kingdom. A manoeuvre, it is aſſerted, was practiſed, to draw Sir Henry Clinton into this belief: a letter from the American general was intercepted, which contained the deſign of an attack on New York. It is ſaid, however, on the other hand, that this was no manoeuvre, but a real accident, and that when this letter was written, the plan of the American army was directed againſt New York. Be this as it may, the effect was the ſame, and Sir Henry was accordingly prevented from ſending that aſſiſtance which lord Cornwallis judged

to be neceſſary to the ſucceſs of his operations. Lord Cornwallis, in the mean time, had taken poſſeſſion of York-town and Glouceſter in Virginia, and was fortifying them in the beſt manner he could.

The truth is, the American generals, in concert with the French generals, and admirals, had originally formed the deſign of ſuch an attack, both by land and water, on New York, as, in all human probability, muſt have been ſucceſsful. Some circumſtances, however, occurred to make them change their plan, and general Waſhington ſuddenly quitted his camp at White Plains, croſſed the Delaware, and marched toward Virginia; and count de Graſſe, the French admiral, prepared to enter the Cheſapeak, and co-operate with him.

Toward the end of Auguſt, Sir Samuel Hood, with a ſquadron from the Weſt Indies, joined admiral Greaves, who lay at New York, and, after ſome delay, which has been thought blamable, arrived in the Cheſapeak on the 5th of September, with nineteen ſhips of the line; but De Graſſe had anchored in that bay, ſome days before, with twenty-four ſhips of the line. The fleets, notwithſtanding this diſparity, came to action *, which ended without a deciſive loſs on either ſide. The Britiſh fleet had 90 killed, and 246 wounded, and ſome of the ſhips were greatly damaged, one ſo terribly ſhattered, that they were obliged to ſet fire to her. The fleets remained in ſight of each other for five

* *Sept.* 5.

days, after which the French anchored within the Cape ſo as to block up the paſſage. The Britiſh fleet then retired to New York, and the French remaining in poſſeſſion of the Cheſapeak, it was thought inexpedient to ſend aſſiſtance immediately to lord Cornwallis.

The combined forces proceeded to York-town, partly by land, and partly down the Cheſapeak: on the 25th of September, they rendezvouſed at Williamſburgh, and, in five days after, moved down to inveſt York-town; the French fleet at the ſame time taking ſuch a poſition as prevented lord Cornwallis from retreating by water. The army halted, in the evening, about two miles from York-town. The Americans amounted to near 8000 continentals, and 5000 militia. The French troops amounted to nearly 7000, with a very conſiderable train of artillery, under the command of the count de Rochambeau. General Waſhington acted as commander in chief. On the 29th of September the town was completely inveſted, and the Britiſh army quite blocked up.

The works erected for the ſecurity of York-town on the right, were redoubts and batteries, with a line of ſtockade in the rear. A marſhy ravine lay in the front of the right, over which was placed a large redoubt. The moraſs extended along the centre, which was defended by a line of ſtockade, and by batteries. On the left of the centre was a hornwork with a ditch, a row of friſe and an abbatis. Two redoubts were advanced before the left. On the 9th and 10th of October the French and

Americans

Americans opened their batteries; in ſix days after, the works of the place were ſo much damaged, that they could ſcarcely ſhow a gun. All hopes of aſſiſtance were gone, and with the failure of an attempt to eſcape, which was baffled by a ſtorm, the laſt hope of the royal army expired. On the 19th, lord Cornwallis ſurrendered himſelf; and his whole army, priſoners to the combined armies of France and America. The principal articles of the capitulation were; that the troops be priſoners of war to congreſs, and the naval force of France; the officers to retain their ſide arms and private property of every kind; but all property, obviouſly belonging to the united ſtates, to be ſubject to be reclaimed. The ſoldiers to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, and Penſylvania, and to be ſupplied with the ſame rations as are allowed to ſoldiers in the ſervice of congreſs; a proportion of the officers to march into the country with the priſoners; the reſt to be allowed to proceed on parole to Europe, to New York, or to any other American maritime poſt in the poſſeſſion of the Britiſh. On theſe articles lord Cornwallis obſerves; "I ſincerely lament that better could not be obtained; but I have neglected nothing to alleviate the misfortunes and diſtreſs of both officers and ſoldiers." He indeed endeavoured to obtain permiſſion for the Britiſh and German troops to return to their reſpective countries, under no other reſtriction than an engagement not to ſerve againſt France and America. He tried alſo to obtain an indemnity for

ſuch of the inhabitants as had joined him; but theſe were refuſed. The only indulgence granted, was, that the Bonetta ſloop ſhould paſs unexamined to New York. By her it was conſequently ſuppoſed, that ſome of the moſt obnoxious loyaliſts made their eſcape.

In the ſiege of this place, the combined army had about 320 killed and wounded. The Britiſh, about 500. The number of men who were ſurrendered priſoners of war, exceeded 7000; but the number of the ſick was ſo great, that not much above half of theſe were able to bear arms. The quantity of ſtores was very conſiderable.

The joy which the news of this great victory diffuſed over the united ſtates, could only be exceeded by the grief and mortification it occaſioned in this country. All our victories combined, all that had been gained by traverſing an immenſe continent, and carrying miſery and deſolation into the very heart of our enemies country, were no balance for the loſs of two ſuch armies as fell at Saratoga and York-town. With this defeat, the war concluded in North America, and the Britiſh remained in New York, Charleſtown, and Savannah, until the ſubſequent negotiation for peace was concluded.

In this detail of the operations which led to a termination of the war, I have purpoſely omitted many petty ſkirmiſhes, and the actions of marauding parties. Theſe are much the ſame in all wars; and, if there is any thing to be learned from them, it is the

humiliating fact, that bravery and humanity do not always go together, and that the name of war gives a charm of impunity to actions, which are not to be defended by any acknowledged principle of true wiſdom, or juſtice.

LETTER LXXIV.

IN England, the public mind had undergone great changes, previous to the diſſolution of the laſt parliament. A general conviction began to prevail, that the conqueſt of America was impoſſible, and that we had the ſhadow of power over part of that country, only while it was awed by the preſence of our troops. The immenſe expenſe attending the war, the known prodigality of adminiſtration in the diſpoſal of public money, and the vaſt ſupplies demanded every year without being properly accounted for, were complaints that now were echoed from one part of the kingdom to another. Nevertheleſs, when the new parliament met *, the ſtate of parties was found to be nearly the ſame as before. Sir Fletcher Norton, by his boldneſs in addreſſing the throne, on an occaſion which was taken notice of in a former letter, had given offence to adminiſtration, and they propoſed, and carried, that Mr. Cornwall ſhould be elected ſpeaker in his room. His majeſty, in addreſſing the houſe, adverted, with an expreſſion of ſatisfaction, to the progreſs of his arms in Virginia and Carolina, which, it was

* Oct. 31, 1780.

conceived, would have important conſequences in bringing the war to a happy concluſion. The addreſs of thanks was combated by the whole ſtrength of oppoſition. It was objected, that the advantages reſulting from the conqueſt of Charleſtown, and the ſubmiſſion of the Carolinians, were neither durable nor important; for, on the firſt appearance of the troops, commanded by general Gates, great numbers of the inhabitants deſerted from the royal ſtandard, and again inliſted under the banners of America. This incident alone, amid a multitude, all equally deciſive of an inveterate antipathy to the government of Great Britain, ſtood forward as the unqueſtionable proof, that our moſt animated and enlarged exertions could never effect the total ſubjugation of the coloniſts. Perſeverance in the attempt muſt drive us to diſgrace and ruin; while not only the houſe of Bourbon, but every power in Europe, would riſe upon the fall of a deſerted empire. Notwithſtanding theſe, and a multitude of other forcible arguments, the addreſſes were carried, in both houſes, by great majorities. The other buſineſs tranſacted before the receſs, related to the bill for continuing the ſuſpenſion of the Habeas Corpus act, with reſpect to perſons accuſed of high treaſon, either in America, or on the high ſeas. The navy eſtimates and ſupplies were combated with great firmneſs; but the miniſter, backed by his uſual majority, carried every point ſucceſsfully. Ninety-one thouſand ſeamen, including upward of twenty thouſand marines, were voted for the ſervice

of the year 1781, and the ſum of 4l. per man, per month, granted for their ſupport and maintenance, including ordnance and ſtores. Of the army, thirty-nine thouſand men were voted for the ſame ſervice and year. The thanks of the houſe were given to Sir Henry Clinton and lord Cornwallis for their important ſervices in America.

After the receſs *, the miniſter communicated to parliament a meſſage from the king, in which his majeſty acquainted them, that, during the receſs of parliament, he had been obliged to direct letters of marque and general repriſal, to be iſſued againſt the ſtates general of the United Provinces, and their ſubjects. For the cauſes and motives of his conduct on that occaſion, he referred to his public manifeſto againſt that republic, which he had ordered to be laid before the houſe. In the courſe of the debates on this ſubject, it was aſſerted, and not diſproved, that the copy of a treaty between the ſtates general and America, was merely the outline of a treaty which had neither been concluded nor ſigned. The miniſtry repelled this and other arguments, with a more than common ſhare of apparent juſtice on their ſide, and an addreſs was carried by a conſiderable majority, that the houſe would, with a firm and determined reſolution, ſupport the juſt and neceſſary war againſt Holland, for the maintenance of the honor of the crown, and the rights and intereſts of the people.

* *Jan.* 25, 1781.

A few days after this *, Mr. Edward Burke, a gentleman of great talents and eloquence, who had devoted much of his time and attention to the ſubject of retrenchment and reform in ſundry parts of the eſtabliſhment, moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill, for the better regulation of his majeſty's civil eſtabliſhment, and of certain public offices; for the limitation of penſions, and the ſuppreſſion of certain uſeleſs, expenſive, and inconvenient places; and for applying the monies ſaved thereby to the public ſervice. As this bill was now rejected, I ſhall only obſerve, that it was on this occaſion the oppoſition were joined by Mr. William Pitt, ſecond ſon to the celebrated earl of Chatham, who delivered a long and argumentative ſpeech, with great force and eloquence, in ſupport of Mr. Burke's propoſitions. Both parties ſeemed to agree, that the virtues and abilities of the late earl were happily revived in his ſon.

When the houſe reſolved itſelf into a committee of ways and means **, the miniſter ſtated, that the vaſt ſum of twenty-one millions would be required for the ſervice of the year. Beſide the powerful arguments urged in the houſe of commons againſt this exceſs of national expenſe, it drew forth a ſpirited proteſt from ſeveral peers, who reprobated the loan, made by the miniſter, as improvident in its terms, corrupt in its operation, and partial in its diſtribution. Twenty-one millions, ſaid they, are added to

* *Feb.* 15. ** *March* 7.

the capital of the debt for a loan of twelve; five and a half *per cent.* perpetual annuity is granted; ſix hundred and fifty thouſand pounds are to be levied in the yearly taxes upon the people. In ſuch a ſituation, the moſt rigid economy ought to have been uſed, and the premium on the loan ought to have been reduced in proportion to the exorbitance of the intereſt to be paid. Several circumſtances appeared favorable to the miniſter, if his object had been to ſerve his country, rather than to raiſe a faction for his own ſupport. Theſe arguments had weight without doors, and the ſubſequent events of the war increaſed the odium which adminiſtration ſoon found to be irreſiſtible. The remaining tranſactions of this ſeſſion, as they bear no direct relation to the war, I ſhall omit, except as far as the affairs of the Eaſt Indies are concerned, a brief ſtatement of which it is now neceſſary to give.

In the maſs of facts which compoſe the Engliſh hiſtory, there is nothing more extraordinary, than that a company of Engliſh merchants ſhould, from being mere adventurers in a foreign trade, by degrees acquire ſuch power and aſcendency, that in the year 1765, we find them maſters of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriza, three of the largeſt and richeſt provinces of the Mogul's empire, which are ſuppoſed to contain upward of ten millions of inhabitants, a number equal to that of the inhabitants of England, or, according to ſome computations, greater. Such, however, is the vaſt territorial acquiſition of the Engliſh Eaſt-India company. As their ſervants

who reſided abroad were under no control, or under a control that was weak and inefficient, that held out no terrors, and could be eaſily eluded; the inhabitants of theſe provinces were plundered and oppreſſed in every ſhape that avarice prompted. The few of the company's ſervants who poſſeſſed greater integrity and humanity, endeavoured to counteract thoſe evils by ſundry wiſe regulations and arrangements, but the cry of the oppreſſed had reached England, and the ſtrong hand of legiſlative authority was thought neceſſary, to take the management of territorial affairs from men who could ſo eaſily abuſe it.

In 1773, an act was paſſed, by which the mayor's court of Calcutta, originally eſtabliſhed by the authority of the Eaſt-india company, ſhould be confined to ſmall mercantile cauſes, and that a new court ſhould be eſtabliſhed, conſiſting of a chief juſtice, and three puiſne judges, to be appointed by the crown, with liberal ſalaries. A ſuperiority was likewiſe to be given to the preſidency of Bengal over the other preſidencies. Accordingly, the following year Sir Elijah Impey, as chief juſtice, with three others, ſailed for India. This court had a ſupreme power over every department of law, and its juriſdiction extended to all perſons, whether Europeans or natives, who acted in the ſervice of the company. A ſcheme, ſo apparently well contrived, failed of the expected effects, owing to their not making a new code of laws, adapted to the exiſting circumſtances of the governments there, but

introducing the Engliſh laws in their full letter and ſpirit, in a country where, they could not but militate againſt ancient cuſtoms, religion, and habits. Nor were the Europeans much better pleaſed with the new judicature than the natives. Frequent complaints were tranſmitted to the court of directors at home, who, in 1777, found it neceſſary to repreſent to one of his majeſty's ſecretaries of ſtate, the improper manner in which they conceived the ſupreme judicature had acted, and the dangers ariſing therefrom to the intereſts of the company. About the end of the year 1780, a petition was preſented to the houſe of commons, from a number of the Britiſh inhabitants of the company's provinces, complaining of the indiſcriminate manner in which the judges of the ſupreme court attempted to exerciſe the Engliſh laws in that country, at the ſame time that theſe very judges took away the benefit of a trial by jury. They appealed to the humanity of the Britiſh parliament, and beſought them to reflect on the innumerable hardſhips which muſt enſue, and the univerſal confuſion which muſt be occaſioned, as well to perſonal rights as to private and public property, by giving to the voluminous and intricate laws of England a boundleſs retroſpective power in the midſt of Aſia, and by an application of thoſe laws, made for the freeſt and moſt enlightened people on earth, the principle of whoſe conſtitution was formed on virtue and liberty, to tranſactions with the natives of India, who had from time immemorial lived under a deſpotic government,

eſtabliſhed on fear and reſtraint. A petition was afterward preſented to the houſe of commons from Warren Haſtings, eſq. governor general, and Philip Francis and Edward Wheeler, eſqrs. counſellors for the government of the preſidency of Fort William in Bengal, in which they repreſented, that though the juriſdiction of the ſupreme court of judicature at Calcutta, and the privileges and immunities granted to the governor general and council, were clearly defined and limited by parliament and the king's letters patent, yet the chief juſtice and judges of that court had exerciſed authority over perſons not legally within their juriſdiction, and had irregularly and improperly adviſed and admitted ſuits againſt the governor general and council; that they had attempted to execute their writs upon perſons of high rank in Bengal, natives of the country, and over whom the ſupreme court had no juſt pretence to exerciſe any juriſdiction whatever. It was added, that the attempt to extent, to the inhabitants of thoſe provinces, the juriſdiction of the ſupreme court of judicature, and the authority of the Engliſh law, and of the forms and fictions of that law, which were yet more intolerable, becauſe leſs capable of being underſtood, would be ſuch a reſtraint on the minds of the people of thoſe provinces as might inflame them, notwithſtanding the known mildneſs and patience which conſtitute their general character, to an open rebellion. And they ſolicited that they, the governor general and council, and all others under their authority,

might be indemnified againſt all the legal conſequences of their reſiſtance to that court.

In conſequence of theſe petitions, and the general diſcontent occaſioned both at home and abroad by the conduct of the ſupreme court of judicature, the houſe of commons ordered *, that the petitions from the Britiſh inhabitants of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriza, and from the governor general and council of Bengal, ſhould be referred to a ſelect committee of fifteen members, to be choſen by ballot. The report of this committee was taken into conſideration in the month of April; but, before I enter on the ſubject of that report, it is neceſſary to advert to the war which had broke out in India, and which, joined to the diſcontents among the company's ſervants, greatly endangered their intereſts in that quarter.

The company's ſervants, as we have ſeen already, had engaged in a war with the Marattas, who likewiſe had Hyder Ally, regent of the kingdom of Myſore, for their enemy, but he had thought proper to make peace with them, and join them in a war with the Engliſh, on pretence that the latter had not kept their treaties with him. About the cloſe of 1779, he had an immenſe military force, conſiſting of 70,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 10,000 Carnatic horſe, 400 Europeans, and a fine artillery, worked by Europeans. In the month of July 1780, he entered the Carnatic with a large army, and committed great devaſtation;

* *Feb.* 12, 1781.

and, the French having promiſed him powerful aſſiſtance, he vowed he would ruin the Engliſh. On the 7th of September, lieutenant colonel Baillie, with a detachment of 300 European infantry, ſome artillery, three battalions of ſepoys, and ten pieces of cannon, was attacked by the ſon of Hyder Ally, whom he defeated. Hyder failed alſo in his attempt on Arcot, the chief town of the Carnatic; but owing to the impoſſibility of an intended junction between the troops of colonel Baillie and Sir Hector Munro, the former was attacked by Hyder, with a much ſuperior force, and totally defeated *. All the Europeans were either cut to pieces or taken priſoners, and about 2000 ſepoys are ſaid to have fallen. Sir Hector Munro retreated immediately to Madras, and Hyder, renewing his attempt on Arcot, made himſelf maſter of it, and found an immenſe quantity of ſtores. His cavalry was over-running the whole country, when Sir Eyre Coote arrived at Madras with a reinforcement of Britiſh troops **, and, taking the command of the army, diſlodged Hyder's troops from ſome places of which they had poſſeſſed themſelves; while Sir Edward Hughes, the Britiſh admiral, co-operated in diſtreſſing Hyder, by deſtroying ſeveral ſhips at Mangalore, his chief ſeaport on the coaſt of Malabar. On the firſt of July, in the following year ***, Sir Eyre Coote brought Hyder to a general action, between Porto Novo and Mooteapollam, which laſted eight hours, and

* *Sept.* 10, 1780. ** *Nov.* 5. *** 1781.

ended in the defeat of Hyder's troops, who were far ſuperior in number to the Britiſh. Hyder's principal general was mortally wounded, and among the killed, who amounted to 4000, were many of his officers. The Britiſh loſt few officers, and not more than 400 privates.

Before this victory *, a motion was made by the miniſter, that a committee of ſecrecy ſhould inquire into the cauſes of the war now ſubſiſting in the Carnatic, and of the preſent condition of the Britiſh poſſeſſions in theſe parts. This was agreed to by the houſe, the oppoſition only contending, that the committee ſhould be *ſelect*, and not ſecret, which was refuſed. When the names of the committee were read, it was obſerved, that, of the fifteen, only two were not friends of adminiſtration. On the 23d of May, the report of the former committee, appointed to conſider the petition of the governor and council of Bengal, was read in the houſe, and leave given to bring in a bill to explain and amend that part of the act paſſed in the 13th year of his preſent majeſty which related to the adminiſtration of juſtice in Bengal; and alſo to indemnify the governor and council of Bengal, for having reſiſted, by force of arms, the execution of an order of the ſupreme court of judicature in that kingdom. By this act, which received the royal aſſent after being diſcuſſed in both houſes, it was declared, that the governor general and council of Bengal were not ſubject to the juriſdiction of the ſupreme

* *April* 31.

court, on account of any thing done by them in their public capacity; and they were indemnified in the reſiſtance which they had made to the orders of that court. It was alſo enacted, that no perſon ſhould be ſubject to the juriſdiction of the ſupreme court on account of his being a landlord, or farmer of land, in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Oriza; that no judicial officers in the country courts ſhould be liable to actions in the ſupreme court for their deciſions; and two muſties, and Behader Beg, who were then in priſon, in conſequence of the deciſion of that court in a particular cauſe, were ordered to be diſcharged.

From this ſketch of the affairs of India, it is neceſſary now to follow up the events of the war as carried on this year between the maritime powers, in various parts of Europe and America. In this detail you will find a variety of ſucceſs, a mixture of gain and loſs, which little tended to balance the diſgrace we incurred by the capture of the Britiſh army in Virginia.

On the commencement of the preſent year *, the French made another attempt to take the iſland of Jerſey. The baron de Rullecourt, with eight hundred French troops, landed at the bank du Violet in that iſland, without meeting with the leaſt reſiſtance from the militia guard, and filled the market-place of St. Hillier, ſoon after dawn of day, without a gun having been fired. The lieutenant governor was ſurpriſed in bed, and made priſoner, but not

* *Jan.* 6, 1781.

before he had found means to ſend notice to three regiments, ſtationed in different parts of the iſland. The French general urged him to ſign articles of capitulation, and threatened, in caſe of refuſal, to fire the town, adding, a moſt egregious falſhood, that he had landed about 5000 men on the iſland. The lieutenant governor anſwered, that, being a priſoner, without all authority, he could ſign no capitulation that would be binding; but, in conſequence of repeated threats, he was induced to ſign ſome articles, and ſent orders to the officers under his command to obey them. Captain Alyward, however, who commanded Elizabeth caſtle, refuſed to ſurrender, fired upon the French, and compelled them to retire; while the Britiſh troops, commanded by major Pierſon, with the militia, aſſembled upon the heights near the town, and threatened to attack the French if they did not lay down their arms, and ſubmit as priſoners of war, within twenty minutes. At the expiration of this time, major Pierſon led on his troops, and attacked the enemy with ſuch vigor and impetuoſity, that in leſs than half an hour they ſurrendered themſelves. The French general, who had compelled the captive lieutenant governor to ſtand by his ſide during the engagement, was mortally wounded, and the gallant major Pierſon was killed in the very moment of victory. The lieutenant governor was afterward tried by a court martial, and ſuperceded.

In the beginning of February, admiral Rodney and general Vaughan took poſſeſſion of the defenceleſs iſland of St. Euſtatius, belonging to the Dutch. The inhabitants were even ignorant that hoſtilities had commenced between the ſtates general and Great Britain, until the governor was ſummoned to ſurrender the iſland and its dependencies. As his ſituation would admit of no parley, he complied, and recommended the town and its inhabitants to the mercy of the Britiſh commanders. But the inhabitants of this place were doomed to ſuffer a degree of rigor that is unprecedented in the conduct of Britiſh commanders. All the property found upon the iſland, both private and public, ſaid to be worth nearly three millions, was declared to be confiſcated. The inhabitants were compelled to deliver up all their money and effects. Their warehouſes were locked up, and acceſs denied to the proprietors, which deprived them of an opportunity of aſcertaining the amount of their commodities, or of ſecuring any future claim to their property by inventories, or other documents. The merchants books, letters, and papers, were alſo ſeized. About thirty Jews were firſt ſtript of their money, to the amount of eight thouſand pounds, and then carried to St. Chriſtopher, without being informed of their deſtination, or permitted to take their families with them. Other Jews, who were ſtript in like manner, were ſuffered to remain on the iſland. By proclamation, all Americans, without diſtinction, all French inhabitants, the Dutch inhabitants

who

who had been citizens of Amſterdam, and all other foreigners, except the ſettled inhabitants of the iſland, were ordered to depart. The property of the inhabitants was ſold by auction, and was permitted to be ſhipped off in Engliſh or neutral ſhips.

The pretence for this ſeverity was, that the inhabitants of St. Euſtatius had afforded aſſiſtance to the Americans, and to the enemies of Great Britain. This, however, ſeemed a ſhallow juſtification; and every man in the kingdom who valued national honor, joined in execrating ſo wanton a breach of humanity, ſo unprovoked and uſeleſs an addition to the calamities of war. It was afterward the ſubject of parliamentary inquiry, and perhaps no ſubject was ever reprobated with greater force of argument, or defended in a manner more lame and impotent.

The Dutch, as I have already obſerved, were never worſe provided for war, than when his Britannic majeſty ordered that hoſtilities ſhould commence; but the firſt naval engagement which took place between their fleet and that of Britain, off the Dogger Bank*, was highly in favor of their courage and ſpirit as ſeamen. The Dutch fleet on this occaſion conſiſted of one 74, one 68, one 64, three 54, and one 44, gun ſhip, beſide frigates, commanded by admiral Zoutman. The Britiſh fleet, under vice admiral Hyde Parker, conſiſted of one of 80, two of 74, one of 64, one of 60, one of 50, one

* *Aug.* 5.

of 44, one of 40, guns, three frigates, and a cutter. The action began about eight in the morning, when the fleets were within half muſket ſhot, and continued for nearly four hours. Little advantage was gained on either ſide. The Britiſh had 104 killed, and 339 wounded; the loſs of the Dutch was ſuppoſed to be greater; and their 74 gun ſhip ſunk ſoon after the action. The Dutch bore away for the Texel, and the Engliſh were too much diſabled to follow them. The Engliſh admiral complained with juſtice of being ſent out without a ſufficient fleet, for which he certainly had applied, and which at this time could have been ſpared.

In the Weſt Indies, to which we again return, a partial engagement took place * between a Britiſh ſquadron of eighteen ſhips of the line, commanded by Sir Samuel Hood, and a French ſquadron of twenty-four ſail of the line, commanded by count de Graſſe, but neither ſide gained or loſt materially. Soon after, the French made an unſucceſsful attempt on the iſland of St. Lucia, but were more fortunate againſt Tobago, which ſurrendered to them on the ſecond of June.

About the beginning of the preſent year, commodore Johnſtone was appointed to the command of a ſquadron deſtined to attack the Cape of Good Hope; but the French, by ſending a well timed aſſiſtance, prevented the ſucceſs of this deſign; in their attack, however, on the

* *April* 29.

commodore's ſquadron at Port Praya, in the iſland of St. Jago, they were beaten off, and the commodore afterward ſurpriſed five Dutch Eaſt Indiamen in the Bay of Saldanha, four of which he took, and the other was burnt. The original object of his expedition having failed, he returned home with his prizes.

The arms of Spain were ſo ſucceſsful in America, that this year they reduced all our ſettlements on the Miſſiſippi, and entirely conquered the province of Weſt Florida. Penſacola ſurrendered to the Spaniſh governor of Louiſiana, who treated the garriſon with great humanity.

The iſland of St. Euſtatius was retaken on the 20th of November, by a ſmall force of 400 French troops, commanded by the marquis de Bouille, who aſſured the inhabitants that he retook the iſland, not to add it to his maſter's poſſeſſions, but to defend it until their high mightineſſes the ſtates general ſhould relieve it by a garriſon of their own. About the ſame time, the iſland of St. Martin fell into the hands of the French.

It is with pleaſure that we can cloſe the hiſtory of this year with one of the moſt gallant exploits of this, or perhaps any other war. The fortreſs of Gibraltar continued to be beſieged, and it was now judged expedient to carry into execution an attempt to ſtorm and deſtroy the whole of the enemy's advanced works *, which had been perfected at immenſe expenſe and labor. For this purpoſe a conſiderable detachment

* *Nov.* 27.

was formed in three columns, and marched from the garriſon, upon the ſetting of the moon, at three in the morning. The columns were ſeverally compoſed of an advanced corps, a body of pioneers, artillery men carrying combuſtibles, and a ſuſtaining corps, with a reſerve in the rear. The pioneers of the left column were ſeamen. The vigorous efforts of theſe troops, on every part of the exterior front, were irreſiſtible; and the enemy, after a ſcattering fire of ſhort duration, gave way on all ſides, and abandoned their ſtupendous works with great precipitation. The pioneers and artillerymen ſpread their fire with ſuch amazing rapidity, that, in half an hour, two mortar batteries of ten thirteen-inch mortars, and three batteries of ſix guns each, with all the lines of approach, communication, traverſe, &c. were in flames, and ſoon reduced to aſhes. The mortars and cannon were ſpiked, and their beds, carriages, and platforms deſtroyed. Their magazines blew up, one after another, as the fire approached them. The enemy, ſeeing all oppoſition to be ineffectual, offered no other reſiſtance than an ill directed fire of round and grape ſhot from the forts of St. Barbara and St. Philipe, and the batteries on the lines; and remained in their camp ſpectators of the conflagration. The whole detachment, whoſe loſs had been very inconſiderable, was in the garriſon again by five, juſt before break of day. An enterpriſe ſo admirably contrived, and ſo ſucceſsfully executed, could not fail to give the Spaniards an exalted idea of the wiſdom of

general Elliot the governor, and of the courage of his troops, who to theſe virtues joined the tendereſt regard to duties of humanity, by their kind treatment of the priſoners, many of whom they aſſiſted to reſcue from deſtruction. The value of the works deſtroyed by this ſally, has been eſtimated at nearly three millions.

LETTER LXXV.

WHEN the parliament of Great Britain met at the cloſe of the year we have juſt reviewed, intelligence had been received of moſt of the leading events that had happened during the receſs, and particularly of the defeat of the Britiſh army in Virginia, which was gently alluded to in his majeſty's ſpeech, but which had ſhaken the power and popularity of the miniſtry to ſuch a degree, that their downfal, in the eyes of many thinking men, did not ſeem far diſtant, and the principal buſineſs of the preſent ſeſſion was a war of words which haſtened it. Their weakneſs, indeed, began to appear ſo glaringly, that victories and defeats, towns taken and towns evacuated, gain and loſs, ſeemed only parts of a monſtrous aggregate whoſe characteriſtic features were error, impolicy, and ignorance. The addreſs in anſwer to his majeſty's ſpeech, was combated by arguments which carried conviction into every part of the Britiſh dominions, and ſuch was the force of popular excitement, ſuch the obvious neceſſity for putting an end to this unhappy war, that the miniſter, whoſe majority was nearly as

two to one at the commencement of the ſeſſion, had the mortification to be left in a minority, within four months after.

It is not neceſſary for the purpoſe of theſe letters, to give a minute detail of all the various motions brought forward. A few of the moſt prominent will be ſufficient. Mr. Burke moved for a ſtrict inquiry into the conduct of the Britiſh commanders at St. Euſtatius, and brought evidence of cruelty and confiſcation, ready to be examined. The debate on this motion was long and warm, and admiral Rodney and general Vaughan who were preſent, entered into an able defence of their conduct, but the miniſtry were determined that no further inquiry ſhould be made, and Mr. Burke's motion was rejected by a great majority. Another important motion, though ably ſupported, fell to the ground. It went to ſtate that the war carried on againſt the colonies and plantations of North America had been ineffectual to the purpoſes for which it was undertaken, and that all further attempts to reduce the Americans to obedience by force would be ineffectual, and muſt be injurious to this country by weakening her powers to reſiſt her ancient and confederated enemies. Againſt this plain propoſition, the miniſter oppoſed a new deſign, namely to keep up a war of poſts in America, for the annoyance of the enemy and the protection of the Weſt India iſlands. The diviſion, however, on this queſtion, though in favor of adminiſtration, exhibited the inconſiderable majority of only forty one.

After the receſs *, the oppoſition gained ground rapidly, and general Conway having moved for an addreſs to his majeſty, beſeeching him to take into his conſideration the calamities of the American war, and adopt the proper meaſures for putting a ſtop to it, the motion was rejected by only one vote; this encouraged the mover to offer it a ſecond time on the 27th of the ſame month, though in the form of a reſolution of the houſe. That happened to be backed by a petition from the city of London, and other places, and was carried by a majority of nineteen. It was followed up by an addreſs to his majeſty, which was preſented by the whole houſe on the 1ſt of March. His majeſty, in his anſwer, declared there were no objects nearer to his heart than the eaſe, happineſs, and proſperity of his people: and that the houſe of commons might be aſſured, that, in purſuance of their advice, he ſhould take ſuch meaſures as ſhould appear to him to be moſt conducive to the reſtoration of harmony between Great Britain and her revolted colonies, ſo eſſential to the proſperity of both; and that his efforts ſhould be directed, in the moſt effectual manner, againſt our European enemies, until ſuch a peace could be obtained, as ſhould conſiſt with the intereſts and permanent welfare of his kingdom.

But this anſwer not appearing ſufficiently explicit, general Conway moved **, that the houſe of commons would conſider as enemies

* *Feb.* 22, 1782. ** *March* 4.

to his majeſty, and this country, all thoſe who ſhould endeavour to fruſtrate his majeſty's paternal care for the eaſe and happineſs of his people, by adviſing, or by any means attempting, the further proſecution of offenſive war on the continent of North America, for the purpoſe of reducing the revolted colonies to obedience by force. After ſome debate, this was carried without a diviſion; but the purpoſe of theſe motions ſeemed yet, in ſome meaſure, to be defeated. The miniſtry ſtill lingered in their ſituations, and it became neceſſary for oppoſition to remove them before any ſubſtantial ſervice could be done to the country. Accordingly, other motions, directly pointed at them, were advanced, when at length lord North announced to the houſe, that his majeſty had come to a full determination to change his miniſters. His lordſhip concluded his ſpeech *, with thanking the houſe for the many inſtances of favor and indulgence which he had received from them during the courſe of his adminiſtration; and declared, that he conſidered himſelf as reſponſible, in all ſenſes of the word, for every circumſtance of his miniſterial conduct, and that he ſhould be ready to anſwer to his country, whenever he ſhould be called upon for that purpoſe. In conſequence of this change, a complete adminiſtration was formed from that party who had compoſed the oppoſition, and who were conſidered as holding whig principles.

The marquis of Rockingham was appointed firſt lord of the treaſury; lord John Cavendiſh,

* *March* 19.

chancellor of the exchequer; the earl of Shelburne and Mr. Fox, principal ſecretaries of ſtate; lord Camden, preſident of the council; the duke of Richmond, maſter of the ordnance; the duke of Grafton, lord privy ſeal; admiral Keppel, firſt lord of the admiralty; general Conway, commander in chief; Mr. Thomas Townſend, ſecretary at war; Mr. Burke, paymaſter of the forces; and colonel Barrè, treaſurer of the navy. Admiral Keppel, Sir Fletcher Norton, and Mr. Dunning, were at the ſame time created peers.

Thus ended the adminiſtration of lord North, of which it is not too much to ſay, that though it was not deficient in talents, or perhaps integrity, yet a principle or ſyſtem had been adopted which rendered the years of its duration the moſt calamitous that are to be found in our annals. The people were ſo fully ſenſible of the weight of public burdens, and of the incapacity of miniſters to alleviate them, that the news of their removal was very generally received with ſatisfaction, and from the abilities, the profeſſions, and the known integrity of the new adminiſtration, great hopes were entertained that they would yet be able to reſcue the nation from the gulph into which ſhe had fallen.

As a cloſe to the preſent letter, I may take notice, that in Ireland a ſpirit of reſiſtance to the dependent ſtate of that kingdom and parliament, was this year crowned with ſucceſs. After various meetings had been held for the purpoſe of expreſſing the ſenſe of the nation on certain important conſtitutional reformations,

Mr. Grattan, an able and popular member of the Iriſh houſe of commons, moved and carried an addreſs to his majeſty, declaratory of the independence of the Iriſh parliament. This was afterward acceded to by the Engliſh parliament, under the auſpices of the new adminiſtration. The utmoſt joy and exultation ſpread over Ireland on this occaſion, and Mr. Grattan's ſervices appeared ſo meritorious, that the parliament of that kingdom voted a grant of fifty thouſand pounds for purchaſing an eſtate, and building a manſion for him.

LETTER LXXVI.

THE change of men in the government of this kingdom, has always been attended with a partial change of meaſures. The preſent adminiſtration began their career by executing ſome of thoſe plans which they had ſo often and ſo earneſtly recommended to their predeceſſors. The firſt and greateſt object of their attention, was, to adopt ſuch meaſures as might lead to peace. Overtures were accordingly made to the ſtates general of Holland, and negotiations for a general peace commenced at Paris. His majeſty made an offer to acknowledge the independence of the United States of America, in the firſt inſtance, inſtead of making it the condition of a general treaty. Admiral Digby and general Carleton were alſo directed to acquaint the American congreſs with the pacific intentions of the Britiſh court, and with his majeſty's offer to acknowledge the independence

of the United States. Beſide this, a variety of reſolutions were entered into concerning the affairs of the Eaſt Indies, which foreboded an entire change in the adminiſtration of our territories in that quarter. A retrenchment took place, in conſequence of a meſſage from the king, in the expenditure of his civil liſt; and that ſyſtem of public economy, which Mr. Burke had formerly in vain attempted to recommend, now began to be practiſed in earneſt. An act was alſo paſſed for excluding cuſtomhouſe and exciſe officers from voting at parliamentary elections; and contractors were ſolemnly excluded from being members of the houſe of commons. All the orders and reſolutions of that houſe reſpecting the Middleſex election and the conduct of Mr. Wilkes, were expunged from the journals, as being ſubverſive of the rights of the whole body of electors in the kingdom. As a part of the ſyſtem of economy, the board of trade, the board of works, and the great wardrobe; the offices of third ſecretary of ſtate, or ſecretary for the American department, of treaſurer of the chamber, cofferer of the houſehold, the lords of police in Scotland, and ſome other offices, were aboliſhed, and a proviſion made for liquidating the debts of the civil liſt, which at this time were very conſiderable. Theſe acts met with little or no oppoſition, and the popularity of the new adminiſtration was advancing rapidly, when an accident created a difference of opinion among them, which ended in their overthrow. But before entering on this ſubject, it is neceſſary to advert to the naval

and military tranſactions which cloſed the war, of which the Weſt Indies continued to be the chief theatre.

About the beginning of this year * the iſland of St. Nevis ſurrendered to the arms of the king of France, and 8000 French troops were landed, about the ſame time, on the iſland of St. Chriſtopher. Admiral Hood, with twenty-two ſail of the line, attempted to relieve the iſland, and beat off, with conſiderable loſs, the French fleet, commanded by count de Graſſe, of twenty-nine ſail of the line. The iſland, however, was obliged to capitulate, after a brave defence. Demerara and Iſſequibo, with ſeveral Engliſh veſſels, were alſo taken by the French.

Soon after, admiral Rodney arrived in the Weſt Indies, and took the command there. His good fortune ſtill followed him, for, on the 12th of April, he encountered and gained a complete victory over the French fleet commanded by count de Graſſe. His fleet conſiſted of thirty-ſeven ſhips, and that of the French of thirty-four. The engagement laſted from ſeven in the morning until half paſt ſix in the evening. No action could be more deciſive, or conducted with greater bravery. It was, in fact, in itſelf, and its conſequences, the greateſt naval defeat ever given to any enemy. By a bold manoeuvre of admiral Rodney's ſhip, the Formidable, the French line was broken and thrown into confuſion. The firſt French ſhip that ſtruck was

* *Jan.* 14.

the Ceſar of 74 guns, which at this inſtant had not a foot of canvaſs not pierced with a ſhot. Unfortunately after ſtriking, ſhe blew up, by which accident 200 Frenchmen, an Engliſh lieutenant and ten ſailors, loſt their lives. Le Glorieux and le Hector, of 74 guns each, were alſo taken by the Engliſh, together with l'Ardent of 64 guns. A French 74 gun ſhip was ſunk during the engagement. The Ville de Paris, a ſhip of 110 guns, on board of which was de Graſſe the French admiral, ſtruck toward the cloſe of the engagement. The havoc among the French ſeamen was immenſe. The Engliſh had 230 killed, and 759 wounded.

A few days after this engagement*, a ſquadron of the Britiſh fleet, commanded by admiral Hood, took the Cato and Jaſon, two French men of war of 64 guns each, the Aimable of 32, and the Ceres of 18 guns. Admiral Barrington's fleet, about the ſame time, took from the French, off Uſhant, le Pegaſe of 74, l'Actionnaire of 64 guns, and ten ſail of veſſels under their convoy. Before theſe events, the new miniſtry had ſent to recal admiral Rodney, and, as it was thought, meant to inſtitute an inquiry into his conduct at St. Euſtatius. But the ſplendor of his victories eclipſed all imputations, and he, as well as admiral Hood, received the thanks of both houſes of parliament, and were advanced to the peerage. The count de Graſſe, after his defeat, was conducted to Jamaica, and thence to England, where he was

* *April* 16.

received at court, and treated with the reſpect due to his rank and ſituation. Theſe victories, however, were counterbalanced by very conſiderable loſſes. The Ville de Paris, Glorieux, and Hector, were loſt at ſea. The Centaur, a Britiſh ſhip of 74 guns, ſunk in the month of September, few of the crew being ſaved; and the Royal George, of 100 guns, overſet and ſunk in the harbour of Portſmouth*. Admiral Kempenſelt, a very brave officer, with other officers, upward of 400 ſeamen, and 200 women, periſhed on this melancholy occaſion.

The iſland of Minorca, after a ſiege of 171 days, ſurrendered, on the 6th of February, to the king of Spain; the Engliſh garriſon amounted to 2692 men; but the Spaniſh army, under the command of the duke de Crillon, exceeded 16,000. During the ſiege, the duke attempted to bribe general Murray, the governor, to deliver up the fortreſs, an inſult which was reſented in a very ſpirited manner; and the conduct of the duke, after the ſurrender, ſhowed, that notwithſtanding ſuch an attempt, he entertained a very proper ſenſe of the courage and inflexible virtue of the governor. In the month of May, the Bahama iſlands, which were incapable of making any defence, ſurrendered to the governor of Havannah.

The defence of Gibraltar ſtill continued to attract the eyes of Europe, as to a ſcene of uncommon bravery and ſucceſs. The governor, according to his cuſtom, allowed the Spaniards

* *Aug.* 29.

to bring their works nearly to perfection, and then almoſt totally demoliſhed them. On the 8th of September, at ſeven in the morning, a heavy fire commenced from the Engliſh batteries, with carcaſes, hot ſhot, and ſhells, upon the Spaniſh advanced works and batteries, and, before ten, two of their principal batteries were completely deſtroyed. The attack made by the Spaniards on the 13th of this month, requires a more particular deſcription. It was made with ten battering ſhips, under the command of admiral Moreno. Theſe ſhips were of different ſizes, from 1400 to 600 tons burden. Their guns, which in all amounted to 212, were braſs twenty-ſix pounders, all entirely new. The number of men on board of theſe ſhips, including officers, amounted to near 8000. The Spaniards had alſo collected, from different ports, about 300 large boats, which were to carry their troops. At ten in the morning, don Moreno's ſhip was placed about 1000 yards from the king's baſtion, and began firing; the others poſted to the north and ſouth, at ſmall diſtances aſunder, likewiſe diſcharged their cannon. The fire was heavy on both ſides, the Engliſh opening their batteries as the ennemy came before them. Red-hot ſhot was ſent with ſuch preciſion from the garriſon, that in the afternoon the ſmoke was ſeen to iſſue from the upper part of the Spaniſh admiral's, and from another ſhip, and men were ſeen laboring to extinguiſh the fire by the uſe of fire engines. Their efforts, however, were ineffectual; for, by one in the morning, the Spaniſh admiral, and ſeveral

others, were in flames. The confuſion of the Spaniards was now ſufficiently manifeſt, and the numerous rockets thrown up, from each of their ſhips, were a demonſtration of the greatneſs of their diſtreſs. Their ſignals were immediately anſwered from the Spaniſh fleet, and attempts were made to bring away the men, it being impoſſible to remove the ſhips. Twelve Engliſh gun boats, each carrying a twenty-four or eighteen pounder, under the command of captain Roger Curtis, then advanced, and were ſo drawn up as to flank the line of the Spaniſh battering ſhips, while they were alſo extremely annoyed by an exceſſive heavy and well directed fire from the garriſon. The fire from the Engliſh gun boats was kept up with ſuch vigor and effect, that the Spaniſh boats did not venture to approach; on the contrary, they abandoned their ſhips, and the men left in them, to the mercy of the Engliſh. The ſcene was now truly dreadful; great numbers of men were ſeen amid the flames, ſome upon pieces of wood in the water, others appearing in the ſhips where the fire had as yet made but little progreſs, all expreſſing by ſpeech and geſture the deepeſt diſtreſs, and all imploring aſſiſtance. The Engliſh made every exertion to relieve them, but the blowing up of the Spaniſh ſhips, as the fire got to the magazines, and the firing of ſome of their cannon, as the metal became heated by the flames, rendered this a very perilous employment. In conſequence, however, of their intrepid exertions, 13 Spaniſh officers, and 344 men, were ſaved. Their loſs muſt have been immenſe.

immenſe. After this memorable victory, lord Howe ſucceeded in relieving the garriſon, and engaged with the French and Spaniſh fleet; but, after a ſevere cannonade, the latter bore away with all the ſail they could.

In America, no action of any importance occurred after the capture of the Britiſh army at York-town. In India, Sir Eyre Coote gained another victory over Hyder Ally *, but the loſs to the Engliſh was very conſiderable, the enemy having been very advantageouſly poſted. In the following month, general Coote was again ſucceſsful over Hyder, and with leſs loſs. On the 10th of November, after a ſhort ſiege, Chittore ſurrendered to the Engliſh. Two days after, the Dutch ſettlement of Negapatam fell into the hands of the Engliſh; and Sir Edward Hughes, about the commencement of the preſent year, took Trincomale, with two Dutch ſhips richly laden, beſide other veſſels then in the harbour. A few days before this tranſaction, general Medows arrived at Bombay, with a reinforcement of land forces, under convoy of three ſail of the line; and Tellicherry, which had for a conſiderable time been beſieged by Hyder Ally's troops, was relieved by major Abingdon **, who completely routed the beſiegers, killed about 400 men, and took 1500 priſoners, among whom was their leader, with an immenſe quantity of artillery, ſtores, and money. But, on the 18th of February, colonel Brathwaite, with a detachment of the company's troops, was attacked, near the banks of

* *Aug.* 26, 1781. ** *Jan.* 8, 1782.

the Coleroon, by Hyder Ally's ſon, Tippoo Saib, and totally defeated. The whole detachment, conſiſting of 2000 infantry, 250 cavalry, 18 officers, and a field train of 13 pieces, were either captured or deſtroyed. The French afterward laid ſiege to Cuddalore, which ſurrendered to them. About this time a ceſſation of hoſtilities took place between the company's troops and the Marattas. Two partial engagements, however, took place between the Engliſh fleet, commanded by admiral Hughes, and the French, commanded by Monſieur de Suffrein, in which the former had the advantage. After this, peace was concluded with the Marattas, and was followed by the death of Hyder Ally, the moſt intrepid and inveterate enemy of the Engliſh.

LETTER LXXVII.

AFTER what the nation had ſuffered from the errors and prodigality of the adminiſtration which conducted the war, it cannot be wondered if very great expectations were formed of the advantages to be derived from the acceſſion of men whoſe principles were purely patriotic, and whoſe talents commanded the admiration even of their enemies. The leading principles in the ſyſtem which they propoſed to purſue, were, to offer to America, unlimited, unconditional independence, as the baſis of a negotiation for peace; to eſtabliſh a ſyſtem of œconomy in every department of government; and adopt the ſpirit, and carry

into execution the proviſions of the bill of reform introduced by Mr. Burke; to annihilate every kind of influence over every branch of the legiſlature; and to continue to the kingdom of Ireland, and ſecure to it, the freedom as now ſettled by parliament; and to do this in the moſt unequivocal and deciſive way. This was a grand, open, and manly ſyſtem. It was what the diſtreſſes of the nation ſuggeſted, and what her recovery required. But how far it would have been carried into effect cannot now be aſcertained. The death of the marquis of Rockingham took place about this time *, and was followed by the appointment of the earl of Shelburne to be firſt lord of the treaſury. This gave ſo much offence to his colleagues, that Mr. Fox, lord John Cavendiſh, Mr. Burke, and ſome others, immediately reſigned their places, aſſigning as a reaſon, that a new ſyſtem, or rather the revival of the old ſyſtem, had been attempted, and that conſequently they could not act with the preſent cabinet. Theſe reaſons did not appear very ſatisfactory to all their friends, and the vacancies in the new adminiſtration were ſoon filled up. Mr. William Pitt was appointed chancellor of the exchequer, and a firm and concerted oppoſition was planned.

The new adminiſtration went on with the treaties of peace, which were ſubmitted to parliament on its meeting in the beginning of the following year; but the oppoſition having, in two inſtances, outvoted the miniſtry, the latter were compelled to yield, and a new adminiſtration was formed by a coalition of parties

* *July* 1, 1782.

the moſt diſcordant that can well be imagined. The duke of Portland was appointed to be firſt lord of the treaſury; lord North and Mr. Fox were appointed principal ſecretaries of ſtate; lord John Cavendiſh was made chancellor of the exchequer; lord Keppel, firſt lord of the admiralty; lord Stormont, preſident of the council; and the earl of Carliſle, keeper of the privy ſeal. Without entering into a detail of the proceedings of this adminiſtration in leſſer matters, it is neceſſary to ſtate, that the negotiations for peace were at length concluded, and are in ſubſtance as follow.

In the treaty between Great Britain and France, it was agreed, that peace ſhould take place to the fulleſt extent, and that meaſures the moſt efficacious ſhould immediately be executed for putting an end to hoſtilities of every kind. Newfoundland was to remain with England as before the commencement of the war; and, to prevent diſputes about boundaries, it was accorded, that the French fiſhery ſhould begin from Cape St. John on the eaſtern ſide, and, going round by the north, ſhould have for its boundary Cape Ray on the weſtern ſide. The iſlands of St. Pierre and Miquelon were ceded in full right to France. The French were to continue to fiſh in the Gulph of St. Lawrence, conformably to the fifth article of the treaty of Paris. The king of Great Britain agreed to reſtore to France the iſland of St. Lucia, and to cede and guarantee to her that of Tobago. The king of France was to ſurrender to Great Britain the iſlands of Grenada and the Grenadines,

St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Chriſtopher's, Nevis, and Montſerrat. The river of Senegal and its dependencies, with the forts of St. Louis, Podor, Galam, Arguin, and Portendic, were to be given to France; and the iſland of Goree was to be reſtored to it. Fort James and the river Gambia were guaranteed to his Britannic majeſty; and the gum trade was to remain in the ſame condition as before the commencement of hoſtilities. The king of Great Britain was to reſtore to his moſt chriſtian majeſty, all the eſtabliſhments which belonged to him at the breaking out of the war on the coaſt of Oriza and Bengal, with a liberty to ſurround Chandernagore with a ditch for draining the waters; and became engaged to ſecure to the ſubjects of France in that part of India, and on the coaſts of Oriza, Malabar, and Coromandel, a ſafe, free, and independent trade, either as private traders, or under the direction of a company. Pondicherry, as well as Karical, was to be rendered back to France; and his Britannic majeſty was to give as a dependency round Pondicherry, the two diſtricts of Valanour and Bahour; and, as a dependency round Karical, the four contiguous Magans. The French were again to enter into the poſſeſſion of Mahe, and of the Comptoir at Surat. The allies of France and Great Britain were to be invited to accede to the preſent pacification; and the term of four months was to be allowed them for the purpoſes of making their deciſion. In the event of their averſion from peace no aſſiſtance on either ſide was to be given them.

Great Britain renounced every claim with reſpect to Dunkirk. Commiſſioners were to be appointed reſpectively by the two nations to inquire into the ſtate of their commerce, and to concert new arrangements of trade, on the footing of reciprocity and mutual convenience. All conqueſts on either ſide, in any part of the world whatever, not mentioned nor alluded to in the preſent treaty, were to be reſtored without difficulty, and without requiring compenſation. The king of Great Britain was to order the evacuation of St. Pierre and Miquelon three months after the ratification of the preliminary treaty, and if poſſible, he ſhould before the expiration of that period, relinquiſh all connexion with St. Lucia in the Weſt Indies, and Goree in Africa. It was ſtipulated in like manner, that his Britannic majeſty ſhould, at the end of three months after the ratification of the treaty, or ſooner, enter into the poſſeſſion of the iſlands of Grenada and the Grenadines, St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Chriſtopher's, Nevis, and Montſerrat. France was to be put into poſſeſſion of the towns and comptoirs which were to be reſtored to her in the Eaſt Indies, and of the territories which were to ſerve as dependencies round Pondicherry and round Karical, ſix months after the ratification of the definitive treaty; and at the termination of the ſame term ſhe was to reſtore the towns and diſtricts which her arms might have taken from the Engliſh or their allies in that quarter of the globe. The priſoners upon each ſide, were reciprocally to be ſurrendered, and without

ranſom, upon the ratification of the treaty; and on paying the debts they might have contracted during their captivity. Each crown was reſpectively to reimburſe the ſums which had been advanced for the maintenance of their priſoners by the country where they had been detained, according to atteſted and authentic vouchers. With a view to prevent every diſpute and complaint on account of prizes which might be made at ſea after the ſigning of the preliminary articles, it was mutually ſettled that the veſſels and effects which might be taken in the channel, and in the North Seas, after the ſpace of twelve days, to be computed from the ratification of the preſent preliminary articles, were to be reſtored upon each ſide; that the term ſhould be one month from the Channel and North Seas, as far as the Canary Iſlands incluſively, whether in the ocean or the Mediterranean; two months from the Canary Iſlands as far as the equinoctial line or equator; and laſtly, five months without exception in all other parts of the world.

Between Great Britain and Spain, it was agreed that a ſincere friendſhip ſhould be re-eſtabliſhed. His catholic majeſty was to keep the iſland of Minorca; and was to retain Weſt Florida. Eaſt Florida was to be ceded to him by the king of Great Britain. Eighteen months from the date of the ratification of the definitive treaty were to be allowed to the ſubjects of the latter who had ſettled in the iſland of Minorca and in the two Floridas, to ſell their eſtates, to recover their debts, and to tranſport their perſons and effects, without being reſtrained

on account of their religion, or on any other pretence whatsoever, except that of debts, and prosecution for crimes. His Britannic majesty was, at the same time, to have the power to cause all the effects that might belong to him in East Florida, whether artillery or others, to be carried away. The liberty of cutting logwood in a district, of which the boundaries were to be ascertained, without molestation or disturbance of any kind, was permitted to Great Britain. The king of Spain was to restore the islands of Providence, and the Bahamas, without exception, in the condition in which they were when they were conquered by his arms. All other conquests of territories and countries upon either side, not included in the present articles, were to be mutually restored without difficulty or compensation. The epoch for the restitutions to be made, and for the evacuations to take place, and regulations for the release of prisoners, &c. were settled in the same manner as in the articles with France.

In the treaty with America, his Britannic majesty acknowledged the united States, viz. New Hampshire, Massachusett's Bay, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, to be *free, sovereign*, and *independent states*. He consented to treat with them in this capacity; and for himself, his heirs, and his successors, he relinquished all claims to the government of them, to their property and territorial rights. That

no diſputes might ariſe in future on the ſubject of the boundaries of theſe United States, it was declared that they ſhould be, from the north-weſt angle of Nova Scotia, that angle which is formed by a line drawn due north, from the ſource of St. Croix river to the highlands, along the ſaid highlands, which divide thoſe rivers that empty themſelves into the river St. Lawrence, from thoſe which fall into the Atlantic ocean, to the north weſternmoſt head of Connecticut river; thence down along the middle of that river to the forty-eighth degree of north latitude; from thence by a line due weſt on that latitude until it ſtrikes the river Iroquois or Cateraquy; thence along the middle of the ſaid river into lake Ontario, through the middle of that lake, until it ſtrikes the communication between the ſaid lake and lake Eric; thence along the middle of that communication into lake Eric, through the middle of the ſaid lake, until it arrives at the water communication between that lake and lake Huron; thence along the middle of the ſaid water communication to the lake Huron; thence through the middle of the ſaid lake to the water communication between that lake and lake Superior; thence through lake Superior northward of the iſles Royal and Philipeaux, to the Long Lake; thence through the middle of the ſaid Long Lake, and the water communication between it and the Lake of the Woods, to the ſaid Lake of the Woods; thence through the ſaid lake to the moſt north-weſtern point thereof, and from thence on a due weſt courſe to the river

Miſſiſippi; thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of the river Miſſiſippi, until it ſhall interſect the northernmoſt part of the thirty-firſt degree of north latitude; ſouth, by a line to be drawn due eaſt from the determination of the line laſt mentioned, in the latitude of thirty-one degrees north of the equator, to the middle of the river Apalachicola, or Catahouche; thence along the middle thereof, to its junction with the Flint river; thence ſtrait to the head of St. Mary's river, and thence down along the middle of St. Mary's river to the Atlantic ocean; eaſt, by a line to be drawn along the middle of the river St. Croix, from its mouth in the bay of Fundy, to its ſource; and from its ſource directly north to the ſaid highlands, which divide the rivers that fall into the Atlantic ocean, from thoſe which fall into the river St. Lawrence; comprehending all iſlands within twenty leagues of any part of the ſhores of the United States, and lying between lines to be drawn due eaſt from the points where the ſaid boundaries between Nova Scotia, on the one part, and Eaſt Florida on the other, ſhall reſpectively touch the bay of Fundy, and the Atlantic ocean; excepting ſuch iſlands as now are, or heretofore have been within the limits of the ſaid province of Nova Scotia.

The people of the United States were to continue to enjoy, without moleſtation, the right to take fiſh of every kind on the Grand Bank, and on all the other banks of Newfoundland; and were likewiſe to exerciſe and continue the ſame privilege in the gulph of St. Lawrence,

and at every other place in the ſea, where the inhabitants uſed heretofore to fiſh. They were likewiſe to have the liberty to take fiſh of every kind on ſuch part of the coaſt of Newfoundland, as Britiſh ſeamen ſhall reſort to; but not to cure or dry them on that iſland. They were alſo to poſſeſs the privilege of fiſhing on the coaſts, bays, and creeks of all the other dominions of his Britannic majeſty in America; and the American fiſhermen were permitted to cure and dry fiſh in any of the unſettled bays, harbours, and creeks of Nova Scotia, Magdalen iſlands, and Labrador. But it was agreed, that after ſuch places ſhould be ſettled, this right could not be legally put in practice without the conſent of the inhabitants and proprietors of the ground. It was accorded that creditors upon either ſide ſhould meet with no impediment in the proſecution of their claims. It was contracted that the congreſs ſhould earneſtly recommend it to the legiſlatures of the reſpective ſtates to provide for the reſtitution of all eſtates and properties which had been confiſcated, belonging to real Britiſh ſubjects, and of the eſtates and properties of perſons reſident in diſtricts in the poſſeſſion of his majeſty's arms, and who had not borne arms againſt the United States. Perſons of any other deſcription ſhould have free liberty to go to any part whatſoever, of any of the thirteen United States, and remain in it for twelve months unmoleſted in their endeavours to recover ſuch of their eſtates, rights, and properties as may not have been confiſcated; and it was concerted, that the congreſs

ſhould earneſtly recommend to the ſeveral ſtates a reviſion of all acts or laws regarding the premiſes, ſo as to render them perfectly conſiſtent, not only with juſtice and equity, but with that ſpirit of conciliation, which, on the return of the bleſſings of peace, ſhould univerſally prevail. It was underſtood, that no future confiſcations ſhould be made, nor proſecutions commenced againſt any perſon, or body of men, on account of the part which he or they had taken in the preſent war; and that thoſe who may be in confinement on ſuch a charge, at the time of the ratification of the treaty in America, ſhould be immediately ſet at liberty. It was concluded that there ſhould be a firm and perpetual peace, between his Britannic majeſty and the United States; that all hoſtilities by ſea and land ſhould immediately ceaſe; and that priſoners on both ſides ſhould be ſet at liberty. His Britannic majeſty engaged, expeditiouſly and without committing deſtruction of any ſort, to withdraw all his armies, garriſons, and fleets, from every port, place, and harbour of the United States. The navigation of the river Miſſiſippi from its ſource to the ocean, was to remain for ever free and open to the ſubjects of Great Britain, and the citizens of the United States. If any place or territory belonging to Great Britain, or to the United States, ſhould be conquered by the arms of either, before the arrival of theſe articles in America, it ſhould be reſtored without compenſation or difficulty.

The articles of peace between the French and Britiſh were concluded at Verſailles, between

Mr. Alleyne Fitzherbert, miniſter plenipotentiary on the part of his Britiſh majeſty, and Charles Gravier, count de Vergennes, the miniſter plenipotentiary on the part of the king of France *. At the ſame time the preliminary articles between Great Britain and Spain were alſo concluded by Mr. Fitzherbert, and the comte D'Aranda, the miniſter plenipotentiary for the Spaniſh monarch. The proviſional articles between Great Britain and America were framed and adjuſted in the month of November preceding at Paris, by Richard Oſwald, eſq; the commiſſioner of his Britiſh majeſty, and Meſſ. John Adams, Benjamin Franklin (the celebrated philoſopher) John Jay, and Henry Lawrence, as commiſſioners of the United States of America.

When theſe articles were laid before parliament **, they underwent a ſevere ſcrutiny; and the miniſtry having, as I obſerved before, been defeated in two motions, that change took place, which introduced a miniſtry compoſed of men whoſe principles were long known to be diſcordant. The treaties of peace, however, were difinitively concluded ſoon after the prorogation of parliament, and at the ſame time the preliminary articles of peace with the Dutch were ſubſcribed at Paris ***, by the duke of Mancheſter, as plenipotentiary for Great Britain, and their excellencies L'Eſtevenon de Berkenrode, and Gerard Brantſen, ambaſſadors extraordinary for the States General.

* *Jan.* 10. ** *Feb.* 17. *** *Sept.* 2.

It was ſtipulated in theſe articles, that a ſincere and conſtant friendſhip ſhould be eſtabliſhed between his Britannic majeſty and the States General; that hoſtilities ſhould ceaſe upon each ſide; and that there ſhould be a general oblivion of all things committed ſince the commencement of the war. With regard to the honor and ſalute by ſea given by the veſſels of the republic to thoſe of Great Britain, it was ordained that they ſhould continue reſpectively according to the method in practice before the commencement of hoſtilities. All the priſoners and hoſtages on each ſide, were to be reſtored without ranſom; each power defraying the expenſe incurred for their ſubſiſtence. Security for payment of debts contracted by priſoners was reciprocally to be given; and all veſſels, whether of war or of commerce, taken after the period of the ceſſation of hoſtilities, were to be reſtored, with their crews and cargoes. The ſtates General yielded and guaranteed to his Britannic majeſty, the town of Negapatam with its dependencies; but the king of Great Britain, conſidering the high importance and value which the States General attached to the poſſeſſion of that town, agreed to treat with them for its reſtitution in the event of being preſented with an equivalent. The king of Great Britain became engaged to reſtore to the united provinces, Trincomalè, with all the other towns, forts, harbours, and eſtabliſhments, which had been conquered, and taken in any part of the world during the courſe of the war. The ſtates General bound themſelves

not to moleſt the navigation of the ſubjects of Great Britain in the eaſtern ſeas. Certain differences between the Engliſh African company and the Dutch Eaſt India company were to be determined by commiſſioners on each ſide, and a time was fixed for the reſtitutions and evacuations agreed to in theſe articles.

Thus ended the moſt extraordinary war in which Great Britain had ever engaged, a war commencing in the revolt of an immenſe part of her empire, and ending in her acknowledging the freedom and independence of that part. The entire progreſs of this war was diſtinguiſhed by events which are intereſting to nations and to individuals. An attempt was made, in purſuance of the common ſyſtem of courts, to reſtrain and ſubdue the ſpirit of a whole people. Every ſtep in this attempt led to diſgrace and defeat. The capture of two ſuch armies as thoſe of Burgoyne and Cornwallis, is an incident that has no parallel in our hiſtory. It could not therefore be ſurpriſing if the people became more deſirous of peace in conſequence of theſe loſſes, than induced to protract the war from the brilliant ſucceſſes of a Rodney or an Elliot. The grand object for which the nation armed was loſt for ever; no hopes could poſſibly be entertained of conquering the Americans, and though the valor of our navy had been attended with its uſual ſucceſs, yet no victory ſeemed to defray its own expenſes. One hundred millions were added to our national debt; trade was drooping under the dangers of war, and the accumulation of taxes, and peace on any

terms became eligible. That France and Spain were equally desirous to terminate hostilities, cannot well be doubted, but whether in the existing circumstances of these two powers, articles of peace more favorable could have been gained, did not appear from the firm tone held by their negotiators, and the eager clamors of the people of this country for peace.

It is to be hoped that the effects of this revolution in America, however fatal they may at present seem to the interests of Great Britain, will yet determine in favor of the latter, when the warmth of prejudice and resentment shall abate, and two nations, united by religion, language, laws and liberty, shall renew their accustomed habits of friendship, and commercial connexion. That a people struggling for liberty and independence should have been assisted in this great effort by a nation hostile to liberty, and strangers to the chief rights of human nature, may appear wonderful; but perhaps it may be a link in the chain of human events; perhaps those who have assisted to emancipate others, may feel that themselves are slaves. Sentiments of liberty once entertained, can never be forgotten. The love of freedom once displayed, the eye cannot turn from its captivations. And so warmly has every enlightened mind in Europe entered into the events of the last seven years, that it is not improbable the independence of America will soon lead to revolutions in countries where freedom has not hitherto reared her head.

Great

Great Britain, miſled in her views of colonial dominion, will now ſee that her beſt intereſt lies in cultivating the arts of peace, and in preſerving the purity of that conſtitution which has juſtly rendered this nation the admiration of the whole world.

From the hiſtory of this, as well as of former wars, we may learn that war, unleſs for the unavoidable purpoſes of defence, is a ſoleciſm in politics, a great abſurdity, as well as a great evil. While it rarely anſwers the purpoſed ends, it unhinges government, endangers freedom, ſwells the tide of corruption, and impoveriſhes the public ſtock of morality and happineſs. And let it be remembered, that to involve a nation in war on pretence of conqueſt, or to indulge an intriguing caprice, however acceptable ſuch a war may be rendered at firſt to an unthinking people, is a crime for which the moſt brilliant talents and the moſt incorruptible integrity exerciſed through the longeſt life, can never ſufficiently atone.

LETTER LXXVIII.

ALL the great and valuable purpoſes which can be effected by the ſtudy of hiſtory, are to be derived, in a very eminent degree, from the hiſtory of our own country. Whatever attention curioſity may prompt us to beſtow on the hiſtory of other nations, our inclination as well as intereſt ſtrongly induces us to return to a more minute conſideration of thoſe events, from which we inherit a fund of wiſdom and experience, that comes home to our immediate neceſſities. It may be ſaid with great truth, that no perſon, whatever his ſituation in life is, can peruſe the hiſtory of paſt ages without reaping ſome inſtructive application to his own caſe and concerns, his public or private ſtation, his ſcience or his occupation. It is therefore peculiarly fortunate, that a deſire to convey to poſterity the hiſtory of our country was cheriſhed, in very early periods, by men of induſtry and talents. To the leaſt celebrated of theſe we owe many obligations; and, if the greater light and knowledge of the preſent times enable us to detect the tale of ſuperſtitious credulity, to unmaſk the perverted ſtory of prejudice, and to rectify the errors of rude and illiterate ages, let us not deſpiſe the labors of thoſe who gave us what they were able to find, and whoſe prejudices were often nurſed by neceſſity; for they lived in thoſe dangerous ages when boldneſs was a crime, and candor would have been perſecuted.

After having, in my former letters, laid before you ſuch a detail of the hiſtory of England as may, by dwelling on your memory, give you a correct idea of the whole, and aſſiſt you in more extended reſearches into the tranſactions of nations and of individuals, I come now, by way of appendix, to lay open to you thoſe ſtores from which all hiſtorians, who are not mere compilers, muſt borrow the materials of their ſuperſtructure. I propoſe to give you ſome account of the principal Engliſh hiſtorians from the earlieſt times to the preſent day, with a ſhort character of each. You will, in peruſing this, ſee much reaſon to admire that providence by which we are ſo excellently provided with records of ages long ſince paſt.

The earlieſt Britiſh hiſtorian, whoſe works are now extant, is Gildas, ſurnamed the Wiſe, who lived in the ſixth century. He wrote a book *De Excidio Britanniæ*, while he reſided in France, to which the Britons had retired with their colony. In this book, or letter, as he calls it, much information may be gathered reſpecting the unhappy ſtate of the Britons at that time. The beſt edition of it was publiſhed by Dr. Gale.

Bede, or Beda, a writer of great renown, flouriſhed in the ſeventh century. This extraordinary man was born at Yarrow, in the biſhopric of Durham. Although much ſought after for his learning, he ſpent moſt of his time in his cell, where he compoſed a variety of works, and among them an eccleſiaſtical hiſtory which contains many particulars of the civil

and military hiſtory of the Britons and Saxons. If we conſider the low ſtate of learning in his time, Beda will appear a prodigy; but it muſt be allowed that he was not without the failings common in dark ages, and which are peculiarly attached to a monaſtic life. He was not exempt from credulity and ſuperſtition, yet his information was the beſt that could be procured, and the copiouſneſs of his materials is at once a proof of his various learning, and his indefatigable induſtry.

Nennius, a monk of the ninth century, left behind him a work entitled *Hiſtoria Britonum.*

Jeffry of Monmouth flouriſhed in the time of Henry I, and was the earlieſt writer of the ancient Britiſh Hiſtory after the conqueſt. The fictitious ingredients of his hiſtory, however, unfortunately predominate, and many able antiquarians conſider the whole as a forgery. In his genealogy of the kings of Britain from the days of Brutus, the pretended ſon of Æneas, he certainly followed Nennius whom I have juſt now mentioned, and who in his hiſtory (publiſhed by Gale at Oxford in 1691) traces this Æneas up to Noah. The authenticity of Jeffry's hiſtory has been called in queſtion by Polydore Vergil, and Buchanan, and has been vindicated by Uſher, Leland, Rice, and others. The beſt edition of his hiſtory in Latin, was publiſhed by Commeline in 1587. There is an Engliſh tranſlation by Thomſon, publiſhed 1718, with a ſenſible preface concerning the authority of the hiſtory, which may be conſulted with advantage.

Caradocus, a Welſh monk, was cotemporary with Jeffrey of Monmouth, and wrote a treatiſe of the ſucceſſion of ſeveral petty kings of Wales. This hiſtory, which is brought as low as the year 1156, has been tranſlated and publiſhed in Engliſh by Dr. Powel.

The earlieſt Saxon hiſtory is the Saxon Chronicle, the compilers of which are unknown. It was printed by Abraham Wheelock at the end of his Bede. It appears to have been enlarged by different hands, as ſome copies end with the year 977, and others not before 1154.

The hiſtory of the reign of the immortal Alfred was written by Aſſer of St. David's, who lived in his court, and who, it is ſaid, perſuaded Alfred to found and endow the univerſity of Oxford. His life of Alfred extends only to the forty-fifth year of the life of that prince, and was continued by other hands. Parker, archbiſhop of Canterbury, brought this manuſcript firſt into light; the laſt edition was publiſhed at Oxford in 1772. A Hiſtorical Chronicle has likewiſe been publiſhed as the work of Aſſer, on the authority of Dr. Gale, the celebrated antiquarian.

Of more modern writers who have thrown light upon the Saxon hiſtory, Richard Verſtegan may be conſidered as one of the chief. He was a native of London, and born in the 16th century, a man of a very ſingular character. His principal work is entitled "A Reſtitution of decayed Intelligence in Antiquities concerning the moſt noble and renowned Engliſh Nation," publiſhed in 1605, and often reprinted

ſince. Although not free from miſtakes, this is a work of unqueſtionable authority. The errors have been corrected by Mr. Sheringham, in his Treatiſe on the Origin of the Engliſh Nation, a work peculiarly intereſting to thoſe who wiſh to be acquainted with the earlier Saxon antiquities.

After the conqueſt, the number of our hiſtorians increaſes. The firſt in the order of time is Ingulphus of Croyland, who was born in the year 1030, and made abbot of Croyland by William the Conqueror in the year 1076. Of this monaſtery he wrote a hiſtory from the year 664 to 1091, which has been often reprinted ſince. In his account of Harold he is evidently biaſſed by his gratitude to William, to whom he lay under many obligations.

The hiſtory written by Marianus, a native of Scotland, who lived in the eleventh century, was in conſiderable eſtimation. It extends from the birth of Chriſt to the year 1083, and was continued to 1200 by Dodechin, abbot of St. Diffibode in the dioceſe of Treves.

Much uſe was made of Marianus by Florentius Bravonius, or Wigornienſis, a monk of Worceſter, who lived in the 12th century. This work was called the Chronicle of Chronicles, and reaches nearly to the time of his death in 1118, and was continued by another monk to 1163. Florentius wrote alſo a Treatiſe on the Royal Family of England.

To the ſame century belongs a hiſtorian of undoubted authority and excellent ſtyle, Eadmerus, who wrote the hiſtory of William I and II,

and Henry I, in ſix books; which were partly publiſhed by Selden in 1623. Eadmer excels in the choice and diſpoſal of his materials, and deals leſs in miracles than any of his predeceſſors.

Aldredus wrote an abridgment of our hiſtory from Brutus to Henry I, which was deſervedly brought into notice by Hearne in 1716. Aldredus is particularly attentive to dates and authorities, and from the elegant conciſeneſs of his ſtyle, has been called the Engliſh Florus.

William of Malmſbury wrote the hiſtory of Saxon kings and biſhops before the conqueſt and after it, concluding with king Stephen. Few authors have had more admirers, and few of early times are quoted oftener by the moſt faſtidious antiquaries.

In the twelfth century alſo, we have Simeon of Durham; whoſe hiſtory of the kings of England is not in very high eſtimation; he continued Bede's hiſtory to the year 1130. Simeon was one of the moſt learned men of his time.

Henry of Huntingdon, ſo called from being archdeacon of that place, flouriſhed in the ſame century. He wrote a hiſtory of England which is frequently conſulted by modern hiſtorians. The arrangement, however, is not convenient, nor have the materials been gathered with much care and accuracy. Sir Henry Savile publiſhed this work in 1596.

William of Newberry's hiſtory begins at the death of Henry I, and is carried on to the year 1197. In the early part of it he refutes the fabulous whims of Jeffrey of Monmouth. His ſtyle is much admired.

Gervaſe of Tilbury, an Engliſhman, made conſiderable additions to the hiſtories of his country. All that is extant, however, begins with the year 1112, and ends with the death of Richard I. From the method and judgment diſplayed in this ſpecimen, it is to be regretted that the whole work was not preſerved.

Roger de Hoveden was one of the principal hiſtorians of the thirteenth century. He wrote a Chronicle of England from where Beda left off down to the fourth year of king John. Sir Henry Savile publiſhed this work in 1601.

Matthew Paris in all reſpects claims the attention of modern hiſtorians. He was a Benedictine monk of St. Alban's, and one of the greateſt ornaments of the thirteenth century. In point of learning, induſtry, and candor, he outſtripped all his cotemporaries. The vigor of his mind, great for the age in which he lived, could not exceed the courage with which he told unwelcome truths. His hiſtory conſiſts of two parts; the firſt extends from the creation of the world to William the Conqueror; the ſecond from William to the year 1250. A monk of the ſame monaſtery continued it to the death of Henry III. Paris' Latin is excellent. The beſt edition of this hiſtory was publiſhed in 1640 by Dr. Wats.

Thomas Wikes, an Auguſtine canon, regular of Oſney, Oxfordſhire, wrote a hiſtory which is much eſteemed for its clearneſs and fulneſs. Commencing with the Conqueror, he goes on nearly to the end of Edward I, in 1306. It was publiſhed by Dr. Gale.

Nicholas Trivet and Roger Ceſtrenſis contributed alſo pretty largely to the hiſtory of this period. Their works were never printed, but have been often conſulted in the Merton college and Harleian libraries, where they are depoſited.

About this time, Selden thinks, John Brompton lived, the author of a uſeful Chronicle which goes under his name. It begins at the year 588 when Auguſtine, the monk, came to England, and ends at the death of Richard I, 1198. There are doubts, however, of his being really the author of this chronicle. It is not a little indebted to Hoveden, but is in itſelf chiefly valuable on account of its containing a tranſlation of the Saxon laws into Engliſh, and being very copious on the Saxon affairs.

From the chronicle of Walter Hemingford, a canon of Giſborough abbey in Yorkſhire, we learn ſome particulars of the reign of Edward III. It was publiſhed by Gale, who gives ſuch an account of Hemingford as he could procure. The Polychronicon of Ralph Higden, a monk of Cheſter, is chiefly a compilation. Many objections have been made to him; but Dr. Gale, who publiſhed the moſt valuable part of it, commends him for reſcuing from oblivion many remains of ancient chronicles.

John, vicar of Tinmouth, and Matthew of Weſtminſter, were uſeful collectors of the labors of others. The works of the latter were continued by Adam Merimuth to the year 1380. Adam began his continuation at Michaelmas, and for that reaſon, if it may be called a reaſon, he always afterward begins the new year at that feaſt.

The laſt hiſtorian of note in the fourteenth century was Henry Knighton, canon of Leiceſter. He begins with Edgar and ends at the death of Richard II. He copies conſiderably from Ralph de Higden, and candidly owns it.

In the fifteenth century, we have Sir John Froiſſart, a learned man. He was born at Valenciennes about the year 1337. His chronicle comprehends the affairs of France, England and Spain, but chiefly England, from the year 1326 to 1400. He was indefatigable in collecting, and careful in admitting only what he could aſcertain to be fact. The manners of the times are very faithfully deſcribed. An Engliſh edition (the original is in French) was publiſhed by Sir John Bouchier, deputy of Calais, at the command of king Henry VIII, at the latter end of his reign. Sleidan epitomized it, but rather partially. Eugueran de Monſtrelet continued Sir John's work to 1467.

In this dark and ignorant century we have few hiſtorians of eminence. Thomas Walſingham, a Benedictine monk of St. Alban's, deſerves to be mentioned as no inconſiderable benefactor. His *ſhort hiſtory* begins at the concluſion of Henry III reign, where Matthew Paris ends, and continues to the end of Henry V. His reign of Edward II, however, is almoſt entirely borrowed from Thomas de la More. Walſingham's hiſtory was publiſhed by archbiſhop Parker in 1574.

William Caxton, the firſt who introduced the art of printing with fuſile types into England, contributed alſo to the hiſtory of his country by

a work called *Fructus Temporum*, which, he ſays, he lighted upon in Latin, and continued in Engliſh. It commences with the firſt inhabitants of the iſland, and ends with the death of Edward IV, in 1483. Much uſeful information may he found in this work, as Caxton was indefatigable in his reſearches.

LETTER LXXIX.

BY the invention of printing, books of all kinds multiplied faſt, and we here take our leave of the age of manuſcripts. The ſixteenth century preſents us with many hiſtorians of note whoſe labors were greatly facilitated by the eaſe with which copies could now be multiplied.

Among the firſt is Robert Fabian, a merchant and alderman of the city of London, and a perſon of very conſiderable learning. His work was entitled the Chronicle of England and France, or Concordance of Stories, beginning with Brutus, and ending in 1504, the 20th year of Henry VIII. His account of London is very full, and he has indeed collected a maſs of information, much of which is not to be found in any former work. It is no ſmall proof of his candor and his conſequence with the public, that he had the honor to excite the jealouſy of cardinal Wolſey, who cauſed as many copies of this book as he could find to be burnt, becauſe Fabian had diſcloſed many particulars of the large revenues of the clergy.

Polydore Vergil, or Virgil, an author of great genius and learning, is to be ranked among the

Engliſh hiſtorians, although a native of Urbino in Italy. He was ſent into England by pope Alexander VI, to collect the peter-pence. His Hiſtory of England was written at the command of Henry VII, and extends into the reign of Henry VIII, to whom it was dedicated; a circumſtance which brought upon him the ſuſpicion of partiality. His account of the reformation is certainly to be read with caution, and, throughout the whole work, he does not ſeem to have riſen ſuperior to thoſe prejudices which the bigotry of his religion and times too often foſtered and countenanced. His Lives of Edward IV and V, are principally valuable, as they are original.

Ralph Holinſhed, was the editor of a voluminous chronicle, which is ſtill in much reputation. He was aſſiſted by William Harriſon; Richard Stanihurſt, and others. The ſecond edition of this work was continued to the year 1586 by John Hooper, *alias* Vowell. The reader will find an immenſe ſtore of anecdote in thoſe volumes, although the ſtyle is poor: the authors were men of mere labor.

The firſt writer worthy of notice in the ſeventeenth century, was the famous antiquary John Stow, a tailor of London, but whoſe taſte in antiquities diverted him from every other purſuit. The greateſt part of his life was ſpent in making preparations for a Chronicle of England, in which he was liberally encouraged by archbiſhop Parker. His works are deſervedly held in eſteem, as he was accurate even to a degree of faſtidiouſneſs, and Bacon and Camden have

borrowed from him, as an author of undoubted veracity. Edward Howe continued and reviſed his Chronicle, and conſiderably improved the arrangement.

But the moſt complete chronicle extant is that of John Speed, who, like Stow, was bred a tailor. His work begins with the firſt inhabitants of the iſland, and extends to the time of James I, to whom it was dedicated. It is ſaid of him, that he had a head the beſt diſpoſed toward hiſtory of any of our writers, and would certainly have outdone himſelf as far as he has gone beyond the reſt of his profeſſion, if the advantages of his education had been anſwerable to thoſe of his natural genius. And it has been aſked, What can be expected of a tailor? As much certainly as of any other mechanic. His being a tailor did not unfit him for being a hiſtorian, but his want of education prevented the exertion of his talents at that age when they are moſt vigorous.

Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle, although a favorite at the time of publication, is, in many reſpects, very erroneous. It commences with the time of the Roman government, and ends at the death of king James I. It was afterward continued by Edward Philips to the Reſtoration; but the continuation abounds in miſrepreſentations and prejudice. The errors of Baker and his continuator were afterward pointed out by Thomas Blount, Eſq; in a work called, Animadverſions, &c. printed in 1672; but in no edition of Baker has any notice been taken of this work.

Clarendon's Hiſtory of the Rebellion is a work of great value and authority; it is neceſſary, however, to compare it with Ludlow's Memoirs, and Whitloke's Memorials of Engliſh affairs. Clarendon's ſtyle is far from being unexceptionable, yet he is the firſt of our hiſtorians who eſſayed to clothe his events in the garb of dignity.

Burnet's Hiſtory of his own Times has divided the opinions of political critics. To me it appears, that his partialities have been condemned with too great ſeverity; and there are many modern writers who indulge in vague cenſure of his work, while at the ſame time they cannot conceal the obligations they owe to him. He had the beſt opportunities of acquiring information, and he neglected none. His errors are common to other hiſtorians, and he always ſeems to have aimed at truth, and related it to the beſt of his knowledge. His hiſtory is, upon the whole, replete with entertainment and information; if you wiſh to know the controverſy kept up concerning him, I muſt refer you to his Life in the Biographia Britannica, an article drawn up with wonderful candor, accuracy, and critical diſcrimination.

Before mentioning more modern and general hiſtories it is neceſſary to add, that we have many ſingle reigns written with great care, and which ſhow conſiderable powers of inveſtigation. Such are the Life of William the Conqueror, by William of Poictiers; of Richard II, by Thomas de la More; of Henry V, by Titus Livius; of Edward IV, by Haddington; of

Edward V, by Sir Thomas More; of Henry VII, by Sir Francis Bacon; of Henry VIII, by lord Herbert of Cherbury; and others. In the perusal of these, you will have to encounter some prejudices, but much useful matter is contained in them.

Of general histories, the most copious, and, in many respects, the best, comes from the pen of Rapin de Thoyras, a Frenchman. His faithful adherence to authorities, his impartiality, and the plenitude of his materials, render this work truly valuable, as in itself containing a historical library. It was successfully continued to the reign of George II, by Mr. Nicholas Tindall, assisted by Mr. Morant, and has been often reprinted.

Of Hume, Smollet, Robertson, and others, it is not necessary to give a particular character. They have rescued history from being a narration of insipid facts, and have given a rationality to the subject, which is the true business of a historian. They are certainly not entirely free from prejudices, nor are political prejudices easily avoided by the best of men. That of Hume, I think, the most dangerous: his politics may be forgiven; but he misses no opportunity to represent religion in an unfavorable light; and superficial readers have imbibed from him a greater contempt for religion, than perhaps it was his intention to instil.

The form which History has taken in our time, is essentially different from the practice of those authors whose names and characters have been now given. The most ancient

Engliſh hiſtorians preſented their readers with a ſeries of events, in the form of a chronicle, in which no inſtruction was conveyed by reaſoning, and no ſuperſtition corrected by philoſophy. In doing what they did, they ſeem to have been principally actuated by a laudable partiality toward their own country. But as to all the purpoſes to which Hiſtory is now applied, they were almoſt, if not altogether, uſeleſs. The little learning of their times was confined to cells and monaſteries, from whence it emanated only to other cells and monaſteries. Public inſtruction had not taken riſe. There was no expreſſion analogous to what we mean by the *public mind.* The inſtruction, therefore, that Hiſtory now affords to individuals, was then little more than a portion of antiquarian taſte, communicated to ſuch only as were opulent enough to employ tranſcribers of their voluminous chronicles. And, as the number of ſuch perſons was extremely ſmall, and the copyiſts probably careleſs and ignorant, we are not to wonder if all our ancient hiſtories, before the era of printing, abounded in errors.

To ſurmount the difficulties which ſuch errors create, is the buſineſs of a modern hiſtorian; and this he can do only by comparing one chronicle with another, by placing his confidence in a multitude of authors who record the ſame event, and by, on every occaſion, weighing the probabilities of contradictory evidence one againſt another. There are, for inſtance, a number of witneſſes who atteſt the ſame fact, but they differ in the date of the

fact,

fact, in the manner of it, in the actors who performed it, and in the causes and consequences of it. He who attentively revolves and examines all these circumstances, where they concur and where they differ, and who extricates a plain fact from a mist of misrepresentation, may be accounted the best historian, and cannot fail to interest the attention, and exercise the judgment, of his readers. Such are, or ought to be, the writers who offer to the public general histories, drawn from the mass of materials contained in our ancient chronicles.

With all the industry and attention, however, which many eminent men have bestowed on our history, it cannot be denied that the earlier periods are still involved in darkness and contradiction. The fact can with difficulty be separated from the fable. But we may console ourselves with the reflection of a great historian of our own times. "The adventures of "barbarous nations, even if they were recorded, "could afford little or no entertainment to men "born in a more cultivated age. The convul- "sions of a civilized state usually compose the "most instructive and most interesting part of "its history; but the sudden, violent, and "unprepared revolutions incident to barba- "rians, are so much guided by caprice, and "terminate so often in cruelty, that they disgust "us by the uniformity of their appearance; and "it is rather fortunate for letters, that they are "buried in oblivion."

The importance of the ſtudy of hiſtory has already been explained to you; and as you have, no doubt, now acquired a general idea of the hiſtory of England, you muſt be aware, that there are ſome periods of it more important than others. There are ſome which deſerve your attentive inveſtigation. The effect of certain events, of ages long ago paſt, yet remain, and it is neceſſary that we ſhould trace them to their origin, and diſcover whether ſuch uſages or inſtitutions were founded on principle, or aroſe from chance or conqueſt. There is a mixture of both in the political hiſtory of all nations, but eſpecially in that of a nation of free and thinking men. After ſtudying the riſe and decreaſe of the feudal ſyſtem, you will naturally wiſh to trace the riſe and increaſe of the popular branch of government; the various ſtruggles for power that convulſed the nation through the greater part of the ſeventeenth century, and the happy termination of theſe by the Revolution.

Upon the whole, Hiſtory, when ſtudied with the honeſt view of inveſtigating truth, and making ourſelves and others wiſer and happier, by improving upon the experience of paſt ages, will be found one of the nobleſt employments of an exalted mind. The imagination will be no leſs amuſed, than the underſtanding ripened and perfected. The conduct of human affairs will often, it is true, appear confuſed and unaccountable; but, if conſidered as a part of ſome grand deſign of the parent of the univerſe to promote human happineſs, you will be ready to acknowledge, that the vices

and miſeries with which Hiſtory abounds, bear no greater proportion to goodneſs and happineſs than ſickneſs does to health. If Hiſtory ſeem terrible, becauſe it is a record chiefly of what is evil and deſtructive, let it be remembered, that it can conſiſt of no other materials. The ſtill life of ſociety may be celebrated by the poet; but the hiſtorian can catch only the prominent features of war and turbulence; and it is indeed from theſe that our inſtruction ariſes. "He," ſays an illuſtrious writer, "who ſtudies hiſ-
"tory as he would philoſophy, will diſtinguiſh
"and collect certain general principles, and
"rules of life and conduct, which muſt always
"be true; becauſe they are conformable to the
"invariable nature of things; and, by doing
"ſo, he will ſoon form to himſelf a ſyſtem of
"ethics and politics, on the ſureſt founda-
"tions, on the trial of theſe principles and
"rules in all ages, and on the confirmation
"of them by univerſal experience."

INDEX.

N. B. *The Roman numerals refer to the volume, and the figures to the page.*

A.

Addiſon, M. Joſeph, II. 90.
Aetius, I. 37.
Agincourt, battle of, I. 186.
Agis, I. 338.
Agitators, I. 387.
Agricola, I. 35.
Aix-la-chapelle, treaty of, II. 152.
Albans, St. battles of, I. 200. 203.
Albemarl, earl of, II. 52.
Alberoni, cardinal, II. 76.
Aldredus, II. 391.
Alençon, duke of, I. 188.
Alexander III. pope, I. 96.
Alfred, I. 49—53.
Alliance, quadruple, II. 74.
Almanza, battle of, II. 43.
Angleſey, I. 34.
Anjou, Margaret, of, I. 201—213.
Anne, princeſs, II. 14.
—— queen, II. 28—56.
Anſon, commodore, II. 112—118.
Arc, Joan, of, I. 195.
Argyll, duke of, II. 5. 67.
Arletta, I. 66.
Armada, invincible, I. 332.
Arnold, general, II. 314.
Arragon, Catharine, I. 269.
Arteville, James d', I. 146.
Arthur, king, I. 43.
—— prince, I. 107.
Arundel, battle of, I. 90.
—— biſhop of, I. 175.
—— earl of, I. 351.
America, I. 252. II. 250.
Aſcham, I. 297.
Aſhburnham, I. 390.
Aſſer of St. David's, II. 389.
Aſſociation, proteſtant, II. 316.
Aſtley, I. 246.
Athelſtan, I. 54.
Atterbury, biſhop, II. 83. 87.
Audley, lord, I. 245.
Aughrim, battle of, II. 21.
Auguſtus, I. 31.
Aumerle, duke of, I. 172.
Auſtin, the monk, I. 45.

B.

Bacon, I. 249. 312—334. II. 395. 399.
Baker, Richard, II. 397.
Baliol, John, I. 328.
Barcelona, beſieged, II. 39.
Barebone, Praiſe-God, I. 408.
Barnet, battle of, I. 212.
Bavaria, II. 125.
Becket, Thomas, a, I. 95—98. 279.
Beckeford, lord mayor, II. 241.
Bede, II. 378. 391.
Bedford, duke of, I. 192.
—— earl of, II. 14.
Bergen-op-zoom, taken, II. 150.
Berkeley, I. 390.
Bible, I. 54. 279. 333.
Biſhops, I. 370. II. 10.
Blake, admiral, I. 406. 410.
Blenheim, battle of, II. 34.
Blount, Thomas, II. 397.
Boadicea, I. 22. 35.
Bolingbroke, Sr. Roger, I. 192.
Bonner, biſhop, I. 302.

Boſworth-field, battle of, I. 231.
Boſton, II. 252—256. 278.
Bothwell, earl of, I. 320.
Bouchier, Sir John, II. 394.
Bouſſlers, marſhal, II. 31.
Boyne, battle of, II. 19.
Brackenbury, I. 224.
Braddock, general, II. 168.
Bradſhaw, I. 395. 417.
Bravonius, Florentius, II. 390.
Britain, I. 26. 32.
Britons, I. 27. 29. 32.
Brompton, John, II. 393.
Bruce, Robert, I. 127.
Brunſwick, prince of, II. 219.
Buchanan, II. 388.
Buckingham, duke of, I. 217. 259. 345—354.
Bullen, Anne, I. 269. 276—282.
Bunkerſhill, battle of, II. 270.
Burgoyne, general, II. 292.
Burgundy, duke of, II. 31.
Burke, Mr. II. 277. 342. 358. 371.
Burdet, Thomas, I. 215.
Burnet, biſhop, I. 431. II. 398.
Bute, lord, II. 225. 229.
Butler, Samuel, I. 431.
Byng, Sir George, II. 75. 174—180.

C.

Cade, Jack, I. 198.
Calais, taken, I. 149. 306.
Calcutta, beſieged, II. 194.
Camden, Mr. II. 395.
Campfight, I. 176.
Canada, II. 215. 228. 272.
Canute, I. 62.
Campeggio, cardinal, I. 272.
Cambridge, I. 53.
Capel, lord, I. 399.
Caradocus, II. 389.
Caractacus, I. 22. 34.
Careleſs, captain, I. 403.
Carleton, general, I. 272.
Carlos, don, II. 98.
Carr, Robert, I. 344.
Carteret, lord, II. 126.
Caſſibelaunus, I. 22. 30.
Cavendiſh, I. 332.
Caxton, William, I. 204. II. 394.
Cecil, William, I. 312.
Ceſar, Julius, I. 21. 28.
Ceſtrenſis, Roger, II. 393.
Chaldgrave field, battle of, I. 376.
Charles, prince of Wales, I. 345.
Charles, I. I. 347—397.
Charles II. I. 384. 417—430.
——— the fair, I. 145.
——— the wiſe, I. 156.
——— VI. Emperor, II. 124.
——— VII. of France, I. 194.
——— XII. of Sweden, II. 74.
——— of Auſtria [illegible]. 40.
Chatham, [illegible], II. 240. 262. 288. 297.
Cheſterfield, earl of, II. 93. 106. 133.
Chronicle, Saxon, II. 389.
Clarence, duke of, I. 209. 215.
Clarendon, II. 398.
——— conſtitutions of, I. 96.
Clarke, Dr. II. 60. 87.
Claudius, I. 33.
Clement VII. pope, I. 268.
Clergy, I. 56.
Cleve, Anne of, I. 283.
Clifford, Roſamond, I. 99.
——— Sir Robert, I. 243.
Clive, lord, I. 193. 250.
Cloſterſeven, treaty of, II. 189.
Colcheſter, taken, I. 392.
Combat, ſingle, I. 165.
Comines, Philip de, I. 206.
Comius, I. 32.
Commerce, I. 21. 252. II. 374.
Commons, houſe of, I. 123.

Commonwealth, I. 399.
Confederation, American, II. 274.
Congreſs, American, II. 259. 262. 281. 291. 302.
Congreve, William, II. 89.
Coningsby, lord, II. 61.
Conſtance, I. 107.
Conſtitution, I. 18. 71. 140.
Coote, Sir Eyre, II. 348. 369.
Cornwallis, lord, II. 310. 337.
Corporation, charitable, II. 99.
Covenant, I. 377.
Cranmer, archbiſhop, I. 275. 291. 305.
Creſſy, battle of, I. 147.
Crevelt, battle of, II. 221.
Criſpin, I. 86.
Cromwell, Thomas, I. 283.
——— Oliver, I. 370. 383—412. 417.
——— Richard, I. 413.
——— Henry, I. 411.
Croſby, lord mayor, II. 244.
Croyland, Ingulphus of, II. 390.
Cruſades, I. 83. 102.
Cudworth, Ralph, II. 87.
Culloden, battle of, II. 241.
Cumberland, duke of, II. 132. 188. 235.
Curfew, I. 74.

D.

Danes, I. 47. 63.
Darnley, earl of, I. 317. 320.
Denain, battle of, II. 52.
Denbigh, earl of, I. 382.
Derby, earl of, I. 243.
Dettingen, battle of, II. 128.
Devereux, ſee *Eſſex*.
Devonſhire, earl of, I, 50.
Digby, lord, I. 370.
Diggs, I. 350.
Diſputes, religious, I. 56.
Dominica, taken, II. 226.
Doriſtaus, I. 406.
Douglas, George, I. 319.
Drake, Sir Francis, I. 322.
Druids, I. 20. 34.
——— female, I. 24.
Dryden, John, I. 431.
Dudley, ſee *Guildford* and *Leiceſter*.
Dunbar, battle of, I. 401.
Dunkirk, I. 410. II. 53. 151. 374.
Dunmore, lord, II. 272.
Dunſtan, abbot, I. 55.
Durham, biſhop of, I. 103.
Dutch, I. 405. II. 326.

E.

Eadmerus, II. 390.
Eaſt-Indies, II. 206. 249. 343. 363.
Edgar I. 57.
——— Atheling, I. 64. 75.
Edgehill, battle of, I. 357.
Editha, I. 64.
Edred, I. 55.
Edward, I. 53.
——— the martyr, I. 60.
——— the confeſſor, I. 62.
——— I. I. 124—129.
——— II. I. 129.
——— III. I. 143—157.
——— IV. I. 203—216.
——— V. I. 216—224.
——— VI. I. 290—294.
Edward the black-prince, I. 148—156.
Edwy, I. 55.
Egbert, I. 45.
Egremont, Sir John, I. 241.
Egwina, I. 53.
Elfrida, I. 58.
Elizabeth, I. 282. 295. 309—330.
Elliot, I. 350.
—— general, II. 383.
England, I. 20. 74.

Empſom, I. 255.
Eſſex, earl of, I. 326. 333.
———— I. 374. 382,
Ethelred, I. 50.
Ethelwolfe, I. 49. 59.
Eugene, prince, II. 33.
Euſtatius, St. II. 352.
Exeter, duke of, I. 174. 206.
—— battle of, I. 293.
Exciſe, II. 101. 230.

F.

Fabian, Robert, II. 395.
Fairfax, general, I. 382. 392. 401.
Falkland iſlands, II. 242.
Family-compact, II. 226.
Farquhar, George, II. 90.
Faſt, general, I. 380.
Faulkland, lord, I. 376.
Fayette, marquis de la, II. 290.
Felton, John, I. 323. 354.
Feverſham, earl of, II. 6.
Fitzaubert, I. 77.
Fitzoſborn, William, I. 105.
Flammock, I. 245.
Fleury, cardinal, II. 123.
Floddenfield, battle of, I. 258.
Florida, II. 228.
Fontenoy, battle of, II. 132.
Fox, Sir Charles, II. 360. 371.
Frederic of Saxony, I. 266.
Frederic II. of Pruſſia, II. 126. 152. 187. 218.
Freind, Dr. II. 89.
Friburgh, taken, II. 132.
Froiſſart, Sir John, II. 394.

G.

Gage, general, II. 253. 265.
Gale, Dr. II. 387—389. 392. 393.
Galloway, earl of, II. 40. 43.
Gam, David, I. 187.
Game-act, II. 162.
Gardiner, biſhop, I. 283. 302.
Garth, Sir Samuel, II. 91.
Gaſcoigne, Sir William, I. 180.
Gavaſton, I. 132.
Gaunt, John of, I. 157.
Gay, John, II. 92.
Genoa, II. 148.
George I. II. 57—86.
—— II. II. 93—223.
—— prince of Wales, II. 104. 120.
—— III. II. 224.
Gertrudenberg conferences of, II. 47.
Gibraltar, II. 37. 85. 322. 355. 366.
Gifford, Dr. II. 12.
Gildas, I. 37. II. 387.
Glendower, Owen, I. 166.
Glouceſter, duke of, I. 174. 216. 222.
———— ducheſs of, I. 192.
Godolphin, earl of, II. 43.
Godwin, earl, I. 63.
Gordon, general, II. 66.
Gordon, lord George, II. 317. 320.
Government, I. 21.
Gray, lady Jane, I. 296. 301.
Gregory, II. 89.
Grenville, Mr. II. 233. 242.
Grey, lord, I. 220. 428. II. 6.
Grouge, John, of, I. 154.
Guildford, lord, I. 255. 296. 301.
Guiſe, duke of, I. 306.
Gunpowder-plot, I. 340.

H.

Halifax, earl of, I. 425.
——— town of, II. 156.
Halley, Dr. II. 89.
Hambden, Mr. I. 359. 376.
Hamilton, marquis of, I. 361.
——— duke of, I. 392. 399.
Hammond, colonel, I. 389.
Hancock, Mr. II. 266.
Hanover, houſe of, II. 55.

Hardicanute, I. 62.
Harfleur, taken, I. 183.
Harley, Mr. II. 44. 54. 61.
Harold, I. 62. 70.
Harrington, earl of, I. 133.
Harriſon, colonel, I. 394.
Haſlerig, Sir Arthur, I. 370.
Haſtings, battle of, I. 69.
——— lord, I. 220. 298.
Hearne, II. 391.
Heinſius, II. 50.
Hemingford, Walter, II. 393.
Henrietta, of France, I. 345. 372.
Henry, I. 77, 85—88.
—— II. I. 88. 92—100.
—— III. I. 115—124.
—— IV. I. 182.
—— prince of Wales, I. 180.
—— V. I. 183—191.
—— VI. I. 191—213.
—— VII. I. 237—253.
—— VIII. I. 254—289.
Heptarchy, Saxon, I. 43.
Hern, I. 246.
Herring, archbiſhop, II. 246.
Herringfiſhery, II. 154.
Hexham, battle of, I. 206.
Higden, Ralph, II. 393.
Hobbes, Thomas, I. 431.
Holinſhed, Ralph, II. 395.
Hollis, Mr. I. 370.
Holmby-caſtle, I. 387.
Hooker, Richard, I. 334.
Hooper, biſhop, I. 303.
—— John, II. 395.
Hotham, Sir John, I. 373.
Hotſpur, ſee *Percy*.
Hoveden, Roger de, II. 392.
Howard, Catharine, I. 284.
Howe, general, II. 269.
—— Edward, II. 396.
Hudſon's bay, II. 53.
Hume, Mr. II. 399.
Huntingdon, Henry of, II. 391.
Hutin Lewis, I. 144.
Hyder Ally, II. 347. 369.

I.

Jamaica, taken, I. 410.
James I. I. 336—346.
—— II. II. 3. 16. 20. 23.
—— IV. of Scotland, I. 244. 258.
Jeffries, judge, II. 7.
Jerſey, iſland of, II. 350.
Jeſuits-plot, I. 424.
Jews-act, II. 161.
Independence, American, II. 281. 287.
Independents, I. 380. 389.
Indians, American, II. 166.
Indulgences, I. 266.
Innocent III. pope, I. 109. 113.
John, King of England, I. 106—115.
—— King of France, I. 155.
John, St. I. 406.
—— II. 43. 61. 85. 88.
John-a-Chamber, I. 241.
Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, II. 243.
Jordan, Margery, I. 192.
Joſeph, Michael, I. 245.
Joyce, colonel, I. 387.
Ireland, I. 410. II. 361.
Ireton, I. 417.
Ironſide, Edmund, I. 61.
Junius, II. 243.
Juxon, biſhop, I. 397.

K.

Keiling, I. 428.
Kimbolton, lord, I.
King's evil, I, 64.
Kingſton, I. 282.
Knighton, Henry, II. 394.

L.

Lafeldt, battle of, II. 151.
Lahogue, battle of, II. 22.

Lalli, general, II. 199. 203.
Lambert, I. 286. 414.
Lancaſter, earl of, I. 136.
——— duke of, I. 166. 171.
Lane, Mr. I. 403.
Langton, archbiſhop, I. 109.
Language, Engliſh, I. 333.
Latimer, biſhop, I. 304.
Laud, archbiſhop, I. 354. 361. 379.
Law, ſalic, I. 144.
—— John, II. 78.
Layer, Chriſtopher, II. 82.
Leeds, caſtle of, I. 134.
Leiceſter, earl of, I. 120.
——— duke of, I. 312—326.
Leland, II. 388.
Lenox, earl of, I. 322.
——— counteſs of, I. 315.
Leo, X pope, I. 266.
Leolf, I. 55.
Leſley, general, I. 401.
Levellers, I. 391.
Lewellyn, I. 125.
Lewis of France, I. 114.
——— XI. I. 214.
——— XIV. II. 8. 18. 30. 46.
Lexington, battle of, II. 267.
Louiſburgh taken, II. 133.
Lincoln, earl of, I. 240.
Lionel, I. 150.
Liturgy, I. 360.
Livy, I. 10. 12.
Locke, Mr. John, II. 87.
London, city of, I. 114. 121. 363. 428.
Londonderry beſieged, II. 18.
Longchamp, biſhop, I. 103.
Lovel, lord, I. 237.
Luther, Martin, I. 266, 282.

M.

Machiavel, I. 157. 384.
Magna Charta, I. 113.
Malmſbury, William of, II. 391.
Mancheſter, earl of. I. 382.
——— duke of, II. 381.
Mar, earl of, II. 66.
March, earl of, I. 169.
Marianus, II. 390.
Marine, I. 53.
Marlborough, duke of, II. 30. 34. 41. 48. 51. II. 221.
——— ducheſs of, II. 29. 47.
Marriage-act, royal, II, 248.
Marriages, clandeſtine, II. 160.
Marſin, general, II. 33.
Martinico taken, II. 227.
Mary, queen, I. 282. 295. 299—307.
——— II. 12. 16.
Maſham, Mrs. II. 47.
Matilda, queen, I. 87—91.
Maudlin, I. 173.
Mazarine, cardinal, I. 410.
Mead, Dr. II. 29.
Meal-tub-plot, I. 424.
Merimuth, Adam, II. 393.
Middleſex-election, II. 240.
Minden, battle of, II. 222.
Minorca, II. 53. 173. 366.
Minute-men, II. 266.
Miſſiſippi-company, II. 78.
Money, I. 32.
Monk, general, I. 414.
Monks, I. 45. 55.
Monmouth, duke of, I. 428. II. 5.
——— Jeffery of, II. 388.
Monſtrelet, Eugueran, II. 394.
Montgomery, general, II. 272.
Montreal, taken, II. 215.
Morant, Mr. II. 399.
Mortimer, Roger, I. 136. 143.
Mowbray, Robert de, I. 83.
Murray, I. 322.
——— general, II. 366.

N.

Naſeby, battle of, I. 382.

Nennius, II. 388.
Neutrality, armed, II. 327.
Newfoundland, II. 53. 372.
Newberry, William of, II. 391.
Newton, Sir Iſaac, I. 431. II. 89.
Noailles, Marſhall, II. 128.
Norfolk, duke of, I. 166. 283. 288. 298. 324.
—— town of, II. 273.
Norman language, I. 75.
Normandy, I. 84.
North, lord, II. 240. 263. 296. 360.
Northamton, battle of, I. 201.
Norton, Sir Fletcher, II. 288. 339.
Northumberland, earl of, I. 169. 178. 293. 300.
———— duke of, II. 58.
Norwich, battle of, I. 293.
Nova Scotia, II. 53. 154.

O.

Oates, Titus, I. 423.
Odo, I. 77. 81.
Oldcaſtle, Sir John, I. 184.
Oliver, alderman, II. 244.
Ordeal, I. 76.
Ordinance, ſelf-denying, I. 382.
Orleans duke of, I. 189.
—— maid of, I. 195.
Ormond, duke of, II. 51.
Oſtorius, I. 33.
Otway, Thomas, I. 431.
Overbury, Sir Thomas, I. 344.
Oxford, I. 52.
—— earl of, I. 249.

P.

Palmer, Mrs. I. 422.
Pandulph, legate, I. 110.
Paper-currency, I. 267.
Papiſts, Iriſh, I. 368.
Par, Catharine, I. 285.
Paris, peace of, II. 228. 362. 372.
Parker, archbiſhop, I. 333. II. 389. 394.
Parker, biſhop, II. 9.
—— Sir Hyde, II. 353.
Parnell, Thomas, II. 92.
Paulinus, I. 34.
Payta, town of, II. 113.
Pelham, Mr. II. 157.
Pembroke, earl of, I. 115. 211. 300. 316.
Pendrell, I. 403.
Penn, Mr. II. 276.
Percy, Henry, I. 169. 177.
Peter the hermit, I. 83.
—— Hugh, II. 8. 11.
Peterborough, earl of, II. 37. 39.
Philadelphia, II. 239. 280.
Philip of France, I. 109.
—— the fair, I. 137.
—— the tall, I. 145.
—— II. of Spain, I. 300—313.
—— IV. II. 33.
—— V. II. 39. 52.
Philips, John, II. 82.
———— Edward, II. 397.
Philpot, Sir John, I. 161.
Picts, I. 36. 42.
Pierce, Alice, I. 156.
Pitt, William, II. 96. 208. 227. 236.
—— the ſon, II. 342. 371.
Plague, I. 149.
Plantagenet, Geoffrey, I. 87.
Plautius, I. 33.
Poitiers, battle of, I. 152.
Pondicherry, II. 204. 307.
Poole, Arthur, I. 315.
Pope, Alexander, II. 92.
Porto-bello, II. 118.
Powel, Dr. II. 389.
Prado, convention of, II. 108.
Pratt, juſtice, II. 233.
Preſbyterians, I. 370. 389. 428.
Preſs, liberty of, II. 243.
Preſton, battle of, I. 392.
Preſton-pans, battle of, II. 136.
Pretender, II. 66. 69. 76.

Pride, colonel, I. 394.
Printers arreſted, II. 244.
Printing introduced, I. 204.
Prior, Matthew, II. 91.
Puniſhments, capital, I. 54.
Pym, Mr. I. 371.

Q.

Querouaille, Mlle. I. 422.
Quebec, taken, II. 215.

R.

Raleigh, Sir Walter, I. 332.
Ramilies, battle of, II. 41.
Rapin, I. 106. 11. 399.
Re, iſle of, I. 352.
Reformation, I. 277. 290. 310.
Republic, I. 366.
Republics, ancient, I. 14.
Revolution, American, II. 250.
Rice, II. 388.
Richard, I. 77.
Richard I. I. 101—105.
——— II. I. 157—175.
——— III. I. 222—232.
Richelieu, cardinal, I. 370.
——— duke of, II. 176.
Richmond, earl of, I. 226—233.
Ridley, biſhop, I. 304.
Rivers, lord, I. 204.
——— earl of, I. 220.
Rizzio, David, I. 318.
Robberies, I. 54.
Robert, duke of Normandy, I. 66. 78. 85.
Rochambeau, count de, II. 313.
Rochelle, I. 352.
Rocheſter, earl of, II. 8.
Rochfort, lord, I. 281.
Rockingham, marquis of, II. 235.
Rocoux, battle of, II. 150.
Rodney, admiral, II. 322. 364, 383.
Rogers, I, 303.
Rowe, Nicolas, II. 91.
Roſbach, battle of, II. 218.
Rump-parliament, I. 414.
Rupert, prince, I. 374. 382.
Ruſſel, lord, I. 293. 428.
——— admiral, II. 22.
Ruthven, lord, I. 319.
Rutland, duke of, I. 202.
Ruyter, admiral, I. 421.
Rye-houſe-plot, I. 428.
Ryſwick, treaty of, II. 26.

S.

Sacheverel, Dr. II. 45.
Saladin, I. 102.
Salem, II. 257.
Saliſbury, earl of, I. 167. 174.
Salluſt, I. 12.
Sanction, pragmatic, II. 125,
Santon, battle of, I. 204.
Savile, Henry, II. 391, 392.
Savoy, duke of, II. 53.
Sautré, William, I. 179.
Saxe, count, II. 130.
Saxon language, I. 45.
Saxons, I. 39—70.
Schomberg, duke of, II. 19.
Scots, I. 42. 150. 363. 386. 392. 402.
Scotus, I. 53.
Sedgmore, battle of, II. 6.
Selden, II. 391. 393.
Seymour, Jane, I. 282.
Shafteſbury, earl of, I. 425. 428. II. 88,
Shakſpeare, William, I. 334.
Shaw, Dr. I. 221.
Sheridan, Sir Thomas, II. 134. 143.
Scheringham, II. 390.
Ship-money, I. 358. 361.
Shires, I. 45.
Shore, Jane, I. 220.
Shrewſbury, battle of, I. 177.
Sicily, II. 53. 75.

Sidney, Sir Philip, I. 334.
Silesia, II. 152.
Simnel, Lambert, I. 238—240.
Skelton, I. 246.
Smith, Richard, II. 101.
Smithfield, I. 282.
Sommerset, duke of, I. 199. 206. 290.
Southamton, earl of, I. 329.
South-sea-company, II. 78.
Speed, John, II. 397.
Spenser, Hugh, I. 134. 138.
——— Edmund, I. 334.
Stafford, Humphrey, I. 237.
Stair, earl of, II. 127.
Stamp-act, II. 234. 237. 242.
Stanihurst, Richard, II. 395.
Staniflaus, II. 124.
Stanley, lord, I. 231.
Statute, bloody, I. 279.
Steele, Sir Richard, II. 90.
Stephen, king, I. 88—92.
Stewart, Mary, I. 313—325.
——— Charles, II. 130—141.
Stowe, John, II. 395.
Strafford, earl of, I. 425. II. 49. 361—368.
Strode, Mr. I. 371.
Suevi, I. 40.
Suffolk, earl of, I. 197.
——— duke of, I. 298.
——— duchess of, I. 295.
Sunderland, earl of, II. 8.
Surrey, duke of, I. 174.
——— earl of, I. 258, 288.
Swayne, king, I. 61. 77.
Swift, dean, II. 90.

T.

Tacitus, I. 11, 12.
Tallard, marshall, II. 34.
Tencin, cardinal, II. 129.
Test-act, I. 422.
Tewksbury, battle of, I. 211.
Throgmorton, Sir John, I. 301.
Tiberius, I. 31.
Tilbury Gervase of, II. 392.
Tillotson, archbishop, I. 433.
Tindal, Nicholas, II. 399.
Tinmouth, John of, II. 393.
Tippoo Saib, II. 370.
Tiptoft, earl, I. 204.
Tournay taken, II. 133.
Tourville, admiral. II. 22.
Towns, chartered, I. 93.
Townsend, II. 93. 242.
Trivet, Nicholas, II. 393.
Tyrrel, I. 84.
——— James, I. 224.

V.

Valois, Philip, I. 146.
Vanbrugh, Sir John, II. 90.
Vantromp, admiral, I. 406.
Venner, I. 417.
Vergil, Polydore, II. 388. 394.
Vernon, general, I. 406.
——— admiral, II. 110.
Verstegan, Richard, II. 389.
Vienna, treaty of, II. 97.
Villanage, I. 44.
Villars, George, I. 344.
——— marshall, II. 52. 125.
Villeroy, marshall, II. 31. 36. 40.
Vincent, St. II. 249.
Virginia, II. 272.
Union, II. 42.
Vortigern, I. 41.
Urban, II. pope, I. 83.
Usher, II. 388.
Utrecht, treaty of, II. 49. 52.

W.

Wakefield-green, battle of, I. 202.
Walpole, Sir Robert, II. 93—121.
Walsingham, Thomas, II. 394.

Waltheof, earl, I. 77.
Walworth, William, I. 160.
Warbeck, Perkin, I. 242—247.
Warwick, earl of, I. 201. 209. 238. 293. 296.
Waſhington, general, II. 271. 278.
Wats, Dr. II. 392.
Wells, lord, I. 208.
Wenlock, lord, I. 212.
Weſtminſter-election, II. 158.
——— Matthew of, II. 293.
What Tiler, I. 160.
White, colonel, I. 409.
Wikes, Thomas, II. 392.
Wilkes, Mr. John, II. 230—239. 244.
William the conqueror, I. 66—80.
——— rufus, I. 81—84.
——— prince of Orange, II. 12—28.
Winchester, biſhop of, I. 91.
——— earl of, II. 15.
Wolfe, general, II. 213. 215.
Wolſey, cardinal, I. 256—274.
Worceſter, battles of, I. 375. 402.
Writers, political, II. 122.
Wyat, Sir Thomas, I. 300.
Wyndham, colonel, I. 404.
——— Sir William, II. 103.

X.

Xenophon, I. 10. 12.

Y.

York, duke of, I. 197—202. 422.
——— archbiſhop of, I. 78.
——— battle of, I. 382.

Z.

Zoutman, admiral, II. 353.

FINIS.